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JOINT OPERATIONS IN A MARITIME THEATER

by  
Brian Boutwell  
September 1989

Thesis Advisor:

Donald Abenheim

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**Some Planning Considerations for Joint Operations in a Maritime Theater**

by

Brian Boutwell  
Lieutenant, United States Navy  
B. S., John Carroll University, 1982

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## ABSTRACT

There are numerous interrelationships between joint operations, maritime theaters, operational or campaign planning, and combat. This thesis is an analysis of the British Turkish campaign of 1915, the German Norwegian campaign in 1940, and the U. S. Korean campaign in 1950 to discover some of these interrelationships. For each campaign, the nation's joint service organization and strategic rationale is discussed in order to show its influence on operational planning. The plan for each of the campaigns is then presented, and compared to the actual combat which occurred during the execution of the plan. The analysis emphasizes two important purposes of the operation plan. First, the operational plan organizes means, space, and time in order to coordinate the actions of the (joint) forces available. Second, the operational plan communicates the intent of the operation to subordinates.

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## I. FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The subject of joint operations in a maritime theater requires an operational perspective of military activity, rather than the strategic-technical approach often taken by contemporary analysts. The strategic-technical approach attempts to directly relate problems of war with specific types of equipment, without considering the human factor. This approach could be represented by the narrow debate concerning the merits of antitank guided munitions versus tanks on the Central Front in NATO, or the merits of nuclear propelled submarines versus surface warships on the seas. By attempting to relate such technical matters directly to strategic considerations, it ignores important intermediate factors, one of which is the linkage between strategy and tactics.

The operational perspective represents one link between the broad national considerations of the strategic level of warfare and the narrower considerations of the tactical level of warfare. Through the lens of the operational perspective, the influence of the interconnecting elements can be discerned. Rather than construct a list of the characterizations of these elements at each level of warfare, it is of greater value to recognize the tensions at the linkage between the demands of national policy and the violence of individual engagements. This tension which exists at the interface of the strategic and tactical levels can be illustrated by events in the Marianas Islands campaign in the Pacific Theater during the Second World War.

Admiral Raymond Spruance, as commander of the Fifth Fleet, was responsible for the conduct of that campaign. His force consisted of two elements: the landing forces, comprised of ground and naval forces, and the fast carrier strike force, which was to act as a covering force for the landing force. On the second day of the amphibious operation, the main body of the Japanese fleet appeared in the theater. Spruance had to decide whether to seek out, with the fast carriers, the Japanese fleet to engage the Japanese in a decisive battle, or to hold the fast carriers in the vicinity of the landing to provide protection.

Spruance was faced with conflicting strategic objective of destroying the Japanese fleet and of capturing the island to continue the advance closer toward the Japanese homeland. He also had to consider the opposing tactical benefits of gaining greater freedom of action for the U.S. fleet and his assigned tactical mission of capturing Guam. Spruance decided to keep the carriers in position to protect the landing.

As the campaign unfolded, the Japanese fleet launched a massive air raid aimed at the landing force. The U.S. carriers, on the tactical defensive, responded by intercepting the raid and preventing an attack upon the amphibious force. However, the U.S. fast carriers were not in range to launch an effective counterstrike against the Japanese carriers. The results of the battle were that the Japanese lost only a few capital ships to submarine attacks as they were withdrawing, but that aircraft from U.S. carriers obliterated the inventory of Japanese sea-based strike aircraft and trained pilots, at little cost to the American fleet.

From the operational perspective, Spruance acted correctly. Nevertheless, he was severely criticized for seeking to protect the landing and for failing to follow the Mahanian tenet of seeking a decisive battle with the Japanese fleet. The result of his appreciation of the operational situation can be compared to the debacle which later occurred at Leyte Gulf when Admiral Halsey left that landing unprotected by the fast carrier task force and pursued a decoy group of Japanese carriers that had no aircraft on board.

Mastery of the operational perspective requires a balanced assessment of both strategic requirements and tactical possibilities, as practiced by Admiral Spruance. This thesis analyzes the role of planning and combat by joint forces in a maritime theater, within the context of the operational perspective. Before expanding on the method followed, the basis of the analytical method must be explained.

## **A. PLANNING AND WAR**

The human ability to imagine the future and to make preparations for it underlies the process of planning. When an individual or organization is confronted with a situation requiring that a specific objective be attained within a limited period of time, the process of planning results in either an explicit or implicit plan. The disparity between the future as imagined during the planning process, and the future as reality unfolds, produces a continued reassessment and change in the plan until the objective is either met or abandoned. To extend this observation into the realm of military operations for the purposes of this study requires an understanding of the nature of war and a specific approach to the planning process.



The primary organizations in the modern international system are nation/states. Each state faces the problem of the eventual merging of the future with experienced reality; the act of planning emerges as a necessary mechanism to guide the affairs of the state. The occurrence of war is often part of the larger context of relations between nation/states; planning is one action taken by the state during war.

Clausewitz characterized war as a trinity of chance, politics, and violence. (Paret, 1986, pp. 201-202) The scope of the subject of war and its relation to politics and society is vast; one means available to guide a study of military operations is to search for interrelationships among the elements of this trinity. Planning for war is one aspect of the affairs of the state, and planning also serves as one of the unifying forces of the trinity.

This study is concerned with the dynamic relationship between planning and joint service organizations in combat in a maritime theater of operations. Subordinate elements of this trinity of war roughly correspond to the subject. Chance is the realm of the commander and the military, of which joint operations are a part. Broad national policy dictated by the government must be applied to specific geographic locations within a theater of operations. The violence of combat created by the clash of wills on the battlefield arises from the execution of a planned course of action. This subordinate trinity of limited scope is also, in part, interconnected by planning.

The planning process, as outlined above, is simple. The frictions inherent to large organizations and the danger associated with combat result in a requirement for a complex planning process. In an effort to reduce friction, formal planning systems are developed by military organizations.

These systems consist of a series of steps to guide the commander and his staff, and include steps such as the estimate of the situation, development of courses of action, development of the plan, writing of the directive, and supervision of the planned action (Cullen, 1970, pp. 15-18). While such a system is valuable to reduce friction and control large organizations, it cannot succeed unless the individuals using the system exercise their creativity and genius. It is this aspect of the planning process which needs to be considered.

This study seeks to relate the operational perspective and the planning/execution dynamic to joint operations in a maritime theater. The method of analysis to be followed consists of an inquiry into the primary considerations of three categories which influence planning: joint operations, theater of operations, and execution.

## **B. METHOD OF ANALYSIS**

The employment of military forces in support of policy requires an appreciation of the means, or forces available; space, or the area of operations; and time, or the phases and engagements of the campaign. In this analysis, the category of joint operations concerns the organization of the means, the category of a theater of operations concerns the organization of space, and the category of execution concerns the organization of time. In each of these categories, there is the potential for planning to be an organizing tool.

### **1. Joint Operations**

Imprecise terminology is often used in the analysis of joint operations. Doctrinally, joint operations mean that two or more services are engaged in a single operation. The implication is that the decision of whether an operation is to be joint or single-service, and the decision of which services

are to be included in that operation, are dictated by a given situation. In practice, however, joint operations often include all services regardless of the dictates of the situation. This later practice would be properly called unified, rather than joint, organization of military forces. There are problems with this term also; separate from unified organization is the concept of unified command. Unified command is derived from the accepted practice of unity of command. The analyst must be careful to separate considerations of the organization of military forces from considerations of the command of military forces.

A further distinction concerning the nature of the organization of military forces can be made between the administrative and readiness function and the operational function. Although both functions are related, they have different organizational requirements. Administration and readiness strives for efficiency, which is best accomplished through a centralized organization. Operations seek effectiveness in combat, which is best accomplished through a decentralized organization. A possible implication of this functional distinction is that the administrative and readiness function is best accomplished through unified organization, while the operational function is best accomplished through a joint organization.

When viewed from the operational perspective, the advantages of joint operations are derived from the advantages obtained through combined arms operations at the tactical level. In a given situation, a joint operation may be dictated either through the requirements of the mission or through the scarcity of forces. To illustrate, given the different capabilities and limitations represented by land, sea, and air forces, there must exist some



ideal combination of these forces that will best accomplish a particular mission. On the other hand, given that the frictions of war and misallocation of forces may result in a scarcity of forces available, a combination of the only forces available must be utilized to accomplish the mission. These are the extreme cases for the justification of the organization of a joint force.

Planning provides the framework to organize the combination among the different types of military forces and to commit to combat that joint force to accomplish the objective to be attained in a given situation. It is clear that the organizational considerations of joint operations are dictated by the situation, which is derived from the conditions which exist within the theater of operations.

## **2. Theater of Operations**

This category is a derivative of the political element at the highest level of warfare. A nation faces economic, diplomatic, and cultural threats and opportunities outside of its geographical borders. These threats and opportunities give rise to national interests, which are ultimately based on the values of the people of the nation. When the national interests of a nation conflicts with the national interest of another, the most extreme form of that conflict is war.

This war could be very simple, or it could be very complex. If it is simple, the fighting is located in one location and the nation does not have to guard against threats from third nations. This allows the nation to devote all available resources in one direction. However, the war could be very complex; the war could be located in more than one direction relative to the boundaries of the nation, and additional threats from third and fourth

nations could be located in still other directions. In order for the political and military leadership to deal with these complications, they can develop different geographical theaters of war as a tool to allocate resources through the ranking of interests.

This process of dividing the spatial dimension of the war can continue down through different levels of analysis: The commander of a theater of war can divide it into theaters of operations. Theaters of operations can be divided into operating areas, and operating areas can eventually be reduced into fields of fire for individual weapons.

This concept is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather descriptive in order to understand the purpose and utility of theaters. Some general characteristics of theaters are:

First, all theaters are indirectly interconnected. Clausewitz defined a theater of operations as "...a sector of the total war area which has protected boundaries and so a certain degree of independence." He continued by noting the nature of that independence, "A sector of this kind is not just a part of the whole but a subordinate entity in itself--depending on the extent to which changes occurring elsewhere in the war area affect it not directly but only indirectly." (Clausewitz, 1976, p. 280)

Second, theaters can be established either as required during a war or prior to the beginning of the war. General Walter Warlimont, a member of the OKW staff, believed that theaters cannot be anticipated prior to war, but that they grow out of the natural progression of the war. (Warlimont, "Reflections", 1979, pp. 38-39) The United States, on the other hand, has a system of established theaters under the Unified Command Plan. The NATO

alliance has done the same, dividing Western Europe into designated theaters of operations for Allied Forces North, Allied Forces South, and Allied Forces Central.

Third, a close relationship exists between a theater and geography. Geographical features determine the both the boundaries of a theater and the nature of the objectives and operations within a theater. A theater encompasses the land and sea within it, and the air space above it. Depending upon the relative position of the nation with the location of its opponents, a theater will consist of varying amounts of land and sea.

This geographical characteristic of theaters leads to a definition of maritime theaters as, "An area of potential wartime operations in which the lines of communication are primarily across water and the potential battlefields are in littoral zones within reach of naval power." (Blair, 1988, p. 35)

There are two considerations concerning theaters of war which are of use in an analysis of planning and which follow from these characteristics and from the reality that the only place that a decisive action can occur is on land by ground forces. The first consideration is the relative importance among theaters of operations. When fighting a primarily continental enemy, it is clear that operations in a maritime theater will usually have a supporting role in the overall course of the war. However, when a nation lacks a comparative advantage in a primary theater, or when both nations are deterred from fighting in a primary theater, the activities in secondary theaters take on a greater importance.

The second consideration for planning is the impact of technology, especially weapons, transportation, and communications technology. The impact of ICBMs, manned space vehicles, and satellite communications may increase the interdependence of theaters of war, but technology still does not make theaters directly dependent on each other. The decisive element in war remains the occupation of ground by the armed forces of the victorious nation. Until the relationship between time and distance becomes simultaneous and the movement of forces from one theater to another becomes simultaneous, events in one theater will only indirectly affect events in another.

The characteristics of a theater governs the nature of operations within that theater. The operational perspective is also concerned with the combat which results from the execution of plans within that theater of operations.

### **3. Execution**

The entire purpose of developing a plan is to achieve in combat an advantage over the enemy through some combination of surprise, initiative, and concentration. The existence of the competing will of the enemy and of the frictions inherent to war leads to uncertainty throughout the execution phase of a campaign.

The planning process must allow for this dynamic aspect created by combat, and produce a plan that is flexible. From the operational perspective, the planning/execution dynamic means that planning does not end with the articulation of a plan. The commander must continue to shape the situation through the actions of his forces. The actions of his forces are initially guided



by his plan, which is then altered through an ongoing process of continued reassessment and adjustments dictated by a changing situation.

The influence of considerations of joint operations and the theater of operations can be discerned in the resultant plan, which is then influenced by the situation created by the execution of that plan in the conduct of the campaign. This is the method of analysis to be used in the paper, which will utilize the categories presented above and apply them to three case studies.

### C. CASES FOR ANALYSIS

Theory itself has little value unless it is rooted in experience. Events of the past can provide the required experience to apply the above method of analysis to three cases representative of the relationship between planning and joint service organizations fighting in a maritime theaters. The three cases selected are the 1915 British campaign in Turkey, the 1940 German campaign in Norway, and the 1950 U.S. campaign in Korea. In addition to each campaign having an historical significance, they are each a theater for potential U.S. military operations and are each the location of contemporary U.S. military exercises. The study of the experience of others in war from the past can illuminate both the conduct of peacetime exercises and the considerations of a commander in combat.

## II. THE BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN TURKEY (GALLIPOLI), 1915

Great Britain's attempt to alter the course of the Great War in 1915 by opening a line of communication with Russia through the Dardanelles failed on the Gallipoli Peninsula. This campaign is an instance of strategic brilliance and tactical incompetence. It brought an end to an era of British foreign policy in which Britain both played the role of power broker to continental states and developed a global empire based on the combined effect of naval forces and land forces in combat within a given theater under a strategic umbrella of maritime power wielded by a powerful island nation.

### A. BRITISH JOINT SERVICE ORGANIZATION

The parliamentary system of government administered by a cabinet is often unable to effectively direct efficient military operations in the Modern Age. In the previous age, British prime ministers had been given wide latitude in foreign affairs, and through support from business interests, had created an empire. Expeditions of naval and land forces were conceived and dispatched at the direction of the prime minister from a central location in London with the advice of the Admiralty, utilizing written communications for general guidance and the initiative of subordinates on the scene to implement policy. A capable minister such as Pitt could execute a grand strategic plan which would unfold over a period of time.

The success of joint service expeditions depended upon the personalities of the military and naval commanders and especially their ability to cooperate to reach a common goal. Command was not vested in a unified commander,

but decisions were made by each commander in his sphere of naval or land interest. This could lead to failure such as the Scheldt expedition in 1809, or could result in huge success such as the Quebec expedition in 1759. A theoretical framework for joint expeditionary warfare was developed by Sir Julian Corbet in his work *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, but attempts by reformers to establish a joint planning agency for combined operations in 1906 was rejected by the navy. (Higgins, 1963, p. 14)

The movement to reform the British military establishment was a result of the performance of the military during the Boer War (1899-1902), specifically with regards to failures in planning and direction of operations and in collection and dissemination of intelligence. The armed forces of the Empire at this time were subordinate to four separate cabinet offices: the War Office controlled the army, the Admiralty controlled the navy, the India Office controlled the Indian Army, and the Secretary of State for Colonies controlled other colonial forces.

In 1902, the Committee of Imperial Defense (CID) was formed to serve as an advisory body to the Prime Minister. (Gooch, 1986 p. 53) The principal members of the CID were the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the senior officer of both the army and navy, and other prominent cabinet members. (Guinn, 1965, p. 6) In 1902 a secretariat was added to the CID; some conceptualized this small secretariat to as a "Great General Staff" to coordinate the activities of the army and navy to meet the defense requirements of the Empire. (Gooch, 1986, p. 54) One of the shortcomings of the CID was that it was convened only at the direction of the Prime Minister, and not on a regular basis. (Gooch, 1986, p. 54)

The army carried out further reform. The Army Council, a governing body to administer the army, was formed in 1904, along with the position of Chief of the General Staff to serve as the principal military member of the Council. (Guinn, 1965, p. 7) In 1906 the Secretary of State for War mandated that a General Staff be formed. The advantages sought were a unified army position on strategic issues that could be articulated in the forum of the CID, and the formulation of strategy from a broad national or imperial perspective, rather than the narrow perspective of the theater of operations. (Guinn, 1965, p. 7)

The Royal Navy was in the midst of technological reform and was not interested in organizational reform. Strategic planning was the domain of the First Sea Lord (the senior naval officer) with assistance from the Director of Naval Intelligence. (Gooch, 1986, p. 54) A naval staff was eventually forced upon the navy in 1911 to improve the capability to advise the Prime Minister. (Higgins, 1963, pp. 35-39; Kennedy, 1983, p. 235)

The CID ceased to function after 25 November 1914 in the aftermath of the crisis and confusion caused by the outbreak of the war. It was replaced by the War Council, ostensibly to provide the Cabinet with a greater degree of control over the conduct of the war. However, it had essentially the same membership and also met at the request of the Prime Minister. The CID secretariat provided staff support for the War Council. (Guinn, 1965, 33-34)

Despite the mechanism of the War Council, a unified strategy for the conduct of the war did not emerge. Decisions were often not final, the members often spoke in public about their differences, and the Prime Minister gave substantial independence to the ministers responsible for the



war effort. This absence of unity was then reflected in the operations of each of the services. The divergent opinions and actions in the prosecution of the war and the lack of an agency to coordinate army and navy operations foreshadowed the failure of the attempted joint service operations at the Dardanelles. (Guinn, 1965, p. 36)

## **B. THE THEATER OF OPERATIONS**

The global proportions of the 1914-1918 war were inevitable, as it followed decades of empire-building by Britain, France, Russia, and Germany. Of these great powers, Britain had the most to gain or lose in areas away from the continent. At the same time, Britain held better geographic positions and committed a higher proportion of its national power overseas relative to the other great powers. In the end, the decisive theater for the western alliance was in France. However, given the existence of global interests, there developed a dialogue in Britain between those who wanted to ally the nation with France to prevent German hegemony on the European continent, and those who wanted to allow the nation to follow a flexible policy of maintaining its empire in the Far East, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, and in Africa.

### **1. Considerations of Empire**

Most of the colonies of the British Empire were located on the littoral of the Eurasian-African landmass of the "world island." Support and sustenance of these possessions was made possible by the relative superiority of British sea power, comprised of both commercial and naval components. Two factors resulted in competition to Britain's position.



The first factor was the rise of the German nation as an economic and political power that dominated Central Europe and threatened to become the primary political influence over all of Europe. The second factor was the advance of the industrial revolution and the subsequent improvement of land transportation by railroad. Many high value goods could now be transported more efficiently by land through the interior of the continent than by sea along the exterior edges. If a railroad were to be constructed from Europe, into Asia Minor at Constantinople, and across the Middle East into China and India, then Britain's commercial status would be compromised. These two factors reflect both Britain's decline as an industrial and commercial power and the relative decline of sea power compared to land power. (Kennedy, 1983, p. 237)

Other threats to Britain appeared as European powers sought their own empire. China was being divided into Russian, Japanese, French, and German sectors. The Russian Empire threatened to expand into northwest India through Afghanistan. Unrest in the Ottoman Empire had the potential of opening a route for the Russians through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean.

If Britain's position were to be analyzed from this perspective, several strategic objectives would emerge. They would be to oppose Russian expansionism, encourage instability in the Balkans to prevent German or Russian domination of that area, and to maintain favorable relations with Turkey (previously the Ottoman Empire) to protect the Suez Canal and to serve as a buffer to Russian access to the Mediterranean Sea. Political realities driven by the onset of war significantly altered these objectives.

## 2. Political-Military Considerations

British strategists also faced the perceived threat of Germany in the years preceding the "Great War." The threat had both a naval and military component, and resulted in both the naval building program of 1906 and the development of army war plans to send an expeditionary force to the aid of France in event of war.

German policy was no more coordinated than British policy. A coalition of industrialists and admirals created the High Seas Fleet, which some thought could serve no purpose other than to antagonize the British. The Royal Navy responded with its own program of naval construction. This program emphasized dreadnoughts and battle cruisers for the battle line, rather than less capable ships suitable for policing the Empire and for escort duty. The fleet changed in composition and in its deployment patterns; stations overseas were stripped of ships to reinforce the Home Fleet. (Kennedy, 1983, pp. 217-218)

The army established a close relationship with the French army by holding a series of secret staff conferences. This was concurrent with the general thrust of policy established by the British foreign office; the Foreign Secretary spoke of a moral duty to support France against the aggression of Germany. With the completion of the Triple Entente in 1907, Britain's interests were linked first to France and Russia rather than to its empire. (Kennedy, 1983, pp. 230-237) There was also the desire to ensure the neutrality of the low countries; strategists believed that a future German offensive would proceed through Belgium.

Turkey began to pull away from the British orbit with the rise to power of the "Young Turks" in 1905, a group of army officers led by Ever Pasha. They turned to Germany for assistance in rebuilding the Turkish Army. Britain's rapprochement with France, driven by the Moroccan crises of 1905-1906, brought Britain into a tacit alliance with Russia, the historical enemy of Turkey. Further, there were members of the British government who favored an alliance with Greece rather than Turkey, further straining Anglo-Turkish relations.

A secret treaty was signed on 2 August 1914 between Germany and Turkey. The Turks used the period from the outbreak of war until early November to mobilize before making their intentions known. Great Britain declared war on Turkey on 31 October 1914.

Germany's attempt to win a quick and decisive victory over France failed after the Battle of the Marne and the "Race to the Sea." The British Expeditionary Force had been sent to France to meet British pre-war commitments, and had managed to avoid annihilation at the hands of the Germans in the first months of combat. Germany then shifted forces from the west to the east to fight Russia, leaving sufficient forces in France and Belgium to defend its gains.

### **3. British Military Considerations**

After the German attempt to achieve a victory in the west failed, Britain found itself without the means or the strategy to bring the war to a conclusion. The army became fixated on the Western Front, and the navy became fixated on the German High Seas Fleet.

As Britain began to mobilize for war, the army came to consist of four tiers of forces. In the first tier were units of the regular army; most of them had been sent to France with the B.E.F. Units of the regular army, generally of battalion strength, that had been stationed overseas at the beginning of the war were organized into the 29th Division. Many of the overseas stations were then garrisoned by Territorial battalions. These had been organized in the early 1900s for homeland defense. The regular army did not think them dependable troops, and hesitated to use them on a major front. There were ten divisions that had not been committed in late 1914. The third tier were troops from the Empire. The Canadian Division and Indian Division were employed in France. The Australian and New Zealand Corps of two divisions debarked in Egypt to conduct final training prior to employment in France. (Guinn, 1965, pp. 59-60) The fourth tier was the New Army comprised of patriotic volunteers and organized by the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener. These forces required equipment and training before they could be considered ready to deploy; they would not be ready until 1916. The Army thus faced a perceived shortage of forces and a real shortage of material for operations in 1915. This had a critical effect on events in the Dardanelles theater.

The Royal Navy also had a multi-tiered organization. The British Grand Fleet, comprised of super dreadnoughts and battle cruisers that were the result of the pre-war naval building program, remained in the North Sea guarding against a sortie by the German High Seas Fleet. The Grand Fleet was the decisive arm of the Home Fleet, to which two thirds of the ships of the Royal Navy had been assigned. The rest of the Home Fleet consisted of



"obsolete" battleships, and destroyers and submarines required for escort and scouting operations. The Admiralty sought to maintain a margin of superiority over the High Sea Fleet as a contingency. It was the size of this margin that dictated the numbers of ships deployed to other theaters. A final tier consisted of specialized ships being built for amphibious operations. These were shallow-draft monitors for shore bombardment and armored steam lighters for the landing of troops to support Admiral Fisher's proposed landing operations on the coast of Belgium with British troops, or in the Baltic with Russian troops transported in British ships. These proposals were not considered feasible by the War Council, and some of these assets were used in the later stages of the Dardanelles Campaign.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary advocated a "Southern Strategy." Two proposals, which were rejected, were to attack Austria at the head of the Adriatic Sea or through Salonika, Greece. The Adriatic option was not thought feasible because of the submarine threat and because of the lack of bases in the area without Italy in the war. The Salonika option also had political problems: Greece would not enter the war against Austria unless assured of Bulgarian neutrality; Bulgaria was concerned about a Turkish attack, and remained uncommitted to either the Entente or the Central Powers at that time.

Turkey then emerged as a threat to Entente interests. The main Turkish effort was an offensive in the Caucasus mountains to recover Georgia from Russia. This was made by the 3rd Turkish Army of three divisions. The British Indian Army moved to protect the Persian Gulf oil fields with one division that was opposed by three Turkish divisions. The



Turks also had a force of three divisions in Palestine, which threatened British control of the Suez Canal. The British forces in Egypt consisted of 70,000 inexperienced troops. (James, 1965, p. 17)

British attention came to be focused on Turkey in December 1914 when Russia asked for a military demonstration to relieve pressure on its forces in the Caucasus region. Lord Kitchener inquired if the Navy could respond to the Russian request for assistance, as he had no troops to spare. Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty immediately saw the strategic possibilities of operations in the Straits against Turkey by the fleet, but ignored the operational and tactical difficulties expressed by his Admirals.

### C. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The British government, and in the larger context the Entente, was not structured to provide unified direction and supervision for the planning of the conduct of the war. Within the fragmented system of the government, compromise between factions could result in the initiation of a military action without the benefit of a careful consideration of means required to sustain that action until the desired ends could be achieved. In the case of the Dardanelles campaign, the Russian request for assistance elicited from the British the articulation of a set of goals to be achieved if the objective of the capitulation of Constantinople was accomplished.

The major goal was to turn the southern flank of the Central Powers to contain the war in Europe. From this would flow other benefits, for example, tightening the blockade of the Central Powers; bringing the Balkan countries and Italy firmly onto the side of the Entente; forcing Turkey out of the war with the control of Constantinople, which was the economic, political, and

military center of the nation; eliminating the threat to Egypt, the Persian Gulf, and India; and opening direct communications with Russia to trade Allied munitions for Russian grain. (Puleston, 1926, p. 11)

Different opinions emerged among the British political and military leadership concerning the viability of a naval-only operation against Constantinople. Some thought that the fleet, once through the defenses and into the Sea of Marmora, could easily defeat the Turkish navy and appear before Constantinople, which would lead to a wide-spread revolt against the Young Turks. (Boswell, 1965, p. 144) Another opinion held that the fleet would require assistance by ground forces to neutralize the Turkish forts, and therefore advocated a combined operation to land troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Some felt that no attempt in the Straits should be made unless it was done in conjunction with a Russian landing operation from the Black Sea into Turkey near the Bosphorus. Finally, there were those who believed that any fleet action against coastal guns protected by minefields was futile and should not be attempted. All of these opinions, freely expressed by members of the government and military experts, competed with another prevalent assessment that Britain should not dissipate its strength in side-shows. General Sir John French, commanding the British Expeditionary Force in France, wrote a report to the government leadership advocating the primacy of the Western Front. He claimed that although the allies could not win a war on the Western Front, as Russia and the Eastern Front was the decisive theater at that time, the Allies could loose the war if Britain did not concentrate all of its available strength to aid France. (Corbett, 1921, pp. 62-63)

The sequence of events dictated the means to be used once the War Council approved, at the urging of Churchill, a naval attack on the Dardanelles with contingent support by ground forces if the situation dictated. On 16 February 1915, Churchill ordered the fleet commanders to make preparations, and he detailed Rear Admiral Wemyss to make preparations for the site of a future base, if required, on the island of Lemnos. The naval attack on the Turkish forts began on 19 February 1915.

### **1. Turkish Defenses at the Dardanelles**

When Great Britain had declared war on Turkey on 31 October 1914, it had conducted a short bombardment of the forts at the entrance to the Straits. This had alerted the Turks and Germans to the vulnerability of the defenses and the need to strengthen them. (Hart, 1930, p. 146)

Under the improved system, the defenses were divided into three zones. At the entrance to the Straits were the outer defenses, which were comprised of a main fort and a support fort on both the European and Asian side. There was a total of four guns with ranges of 14,800 meters and twenty guns with ranges of 7,500 meters. The intermediate defense zone, between the entrance to the Straits and the Narrows, was built after the allied bombardment on 3 November 1914. This consisted of mobile field guns transported on roads along the shore, and moored mines. If a fleet got through the outer zone, the mines would stop the fleet; if the enemy tried to sweep the mines, then the field guns on the shore would damage the light minesweepers. At the Narrows there were seventy-eight guns (eight large caliber, long-range guns and seventy smaller caliber, medium-to-short-range guns) in permanent fortifications. There were also minefields and a shore

torpedo battery. This inner zone was the final barrier before reaching the Sea of Marmara. (Puleston, 1926, pp. 24-25)

## **2. The British Naval Attack**

After receiving the admiralty order to force the Straits with the fleet, Vice Admiral Carden began a phased operation to methodically neutralize the Turkish defenses with gunfire from battleships and minesweeping operations. The first phase was to conduct a long-range (12,000 yards) bombardment of the entrance forts, then a medium-range (5,000-10,000 yards) bombardment, then direct, overwhelming fire at short-range (3,000-5,000 yards) to completely reduce the forts. At that time, landing parties would be put ashore to complete the destruction of the guns. This phase began on 19 February 1915. (Puleston, 1926, pp. 25-26)

The first attack was inconclusive; counter-fire from the forts drove the ships away. The fleet reassessed the situation, altered tactics, and prepared for another attempt. Bad weather delayed further operations until 25 February. The second attack was successful in destroying the forts, and minesweeping operations in the intermediate zone began that night.

The second phase of the fleet operation was to clear the minefields so that the battleships could reduce the forts of the inner zone with the same tactics used in the outer zone. The minesweeping operations continued from 25 February to 17 March, often interrupted by bad weather. The fire from the field guns did little physical damage, but had a psychological effect on the crews of the minesweepers.

The minesweeping was proceeding at too slow of a pace for Churchill, so the third phase began before the second was complete. Sufficient sea room



had been cleared of mines so that the battleships could position for the bombardment. In the new plan, further minesweeping would be done in conjunction with the bombardment. Unknown to the fleet, the Turks had laid a new minefield in the maneuver area for the battleships. (Puleston, pp. 37-40, 46)

The renewed attack on 18 March was led by Vice Admiral de Robeck who replaced the invalided Carden. Operations were proceeding as planned, with the ships inflicting substantial damage on the forts at the Narrows. As the attack continued, the battleships came upon the new minefield; three ships were sunk and three were damaged. The fleet then withdrew for the day. The impact of losing a portion of his major warships convinced the admiral that another attack should not be made. The Turks had suffered considerable damage, armor piercing ammunition for the larger guns was almost depleted, and the minesweepers had cleared a channel up to the Narrows forts. Rather than continue a naval attack, a combined operation was approved to capture the European Narrows from land, then allow the fleet to pass into the Sea of Marmara leaving the Army to remain on the Gallipoli Peninsula to protect the fleet's lines of communication. (Keyes, 1943, pp. 39-41)

### **3. Allocation of British Ground Forces**

After much deliberation, Lord Kitchener finally made the decision to commit the 29th Division to the Mediterranean rather than to France. Additional units of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force included the Australian and New Zealand Corps (ANZAC) of two divisions that had been training in Egypt, the 1st Division provided by the French from their colonial

forces, and the Royal Naval Division provided by the Admiralty. General Sir Ian Hamilton was assigned to command the ground forces of the expedition.

The 29th Division began to leave England on 10 March for the base at Port Mudros on the island of Lemnos being developed by Rear Admiral Wymess. Hamilton found that the division had not been combat-loaded onto the transports in England; the ships had been loaded to make efficient use of space in the hull rather than in a manner that they could be sequentially off-loaded in a combat zone to support a landing and to sustain operations on shore. There were not adequate port facilities and cargo handling equipment on Lemnos to reconfigure the load, so all transports were sent to Alexandria, Egypt. The reconfiguration was expected to be completed in time for a landing in mid-April, but complications resulted in a further delay of two weeks. (Hart, 1930, pp. 156)

#### **4. Turkish Defenses on the Gallipoli Peninsula**

The Turkish Army totaled 400,000 men organized into fifty divisions. The Turks stationed approximately twenty-two reserve divisions in the center of the country in the region around the city of Ankara. To the east, south, and west in the Caucasus region, Mesopotamia, and Palestine were forces fighting the Russians and British. There were three armies deployed to protect the capital: one with headquarters in Adrianpole of five divisions along the Bulgarian border, the 6th Army of six divisions guarding the Bosphorus against the Russian attack, and, at the time of the 25 April landing, the 5th Army of six divisions guarding the Dardanelles. (Puleston, 1926, pp. 56-57)

After the allied naval attack of 18 March, the commander of the Turkish Army appointed General Liman von Sanders, a German military advisor, to command the 5th Army and to restore order in the Dardanelles theater. They believed a subsequent attack was shortly forthcoming.

Sanders found the 5th Army deployed in a "cordon system" of defense along a sixty mile front from Xeros Bay to Bashika Bay. The Turks were trying to defend forward positions everywhere; as a result they were weak along the entire front, and could not maneuver quickly enough to mass forces at the point of attack because of the rough terrain and poor communications. Sanders reorganized his forces by concentrating each division in the interior of the theater away from the coast. He built additional roads and trails in the interior, and entrenchments at obvious points of attack. He allowed small units to be stationed along the coast which would serve to delay a landing until the defenders could be reinforced by reserves. He also strengthened the defenses at Bulair, where the Gallipoli Peninsula joins the mainland; he felt that this was the most vulnerable position on the Gallipoli Peninsula subject to British attack from the sea.

## **5. Alternative Courses of Action**

Hamilton was faced with a variety of practical problems as he considered various courses of action. The planning for the landing and follow-on operation was conducted with scant information about the enemy and with inaccurate maps of the Peninsula. The only information available was a 1912 handbook of the Turkish Army, a pre-war report on the Dardanelles forts, and one inaccurate map. (Hart, 1930, p. 156)

The directive issued by Kitchener giving guidelines for the land operations forbade any major actions on the Asiatic shore of the Straits. Although the potential existed for a landing in Besika Bay and a rapid movement to the rear of the Asiatic forts, the fleet would be unable to provide direct support for much of the Army's advance. A second alternative, that was dismissed by Hamilton and his staff, would have landed forces at Bulair and captured the narrow neck of the Peninsula. This would have trapped the Turkish forces to the south stationed on the Peninsula; however, this would put the fleet out of position both to support the landing and to operate against the Dardanelles. The landing also would be against very strong, prepared enemy positions, and it would place the inferior Allied army within reach of three Turkish armies. (Hamilton, 1921, p. 95)

The only alternative remaining was to land on the western shore of the Gallipoli Peninsula. There were three general landing areas: Sulva Bay, Gaba Tepe, and Cape Helles. The navy had insufficient hydrographic data on conditions at Sulva Bay, and it was at the widest point of the Peninsula, away from the forts at the Narrows, so this alternative was quickly dismissed. Hamilton decided on landings at Gaba Tepe, as a major feint, and at Cape Helles as the main effort. (Hamilton, 1921, pp. 98-99)

The other dimension of selecting alternatives was when to attack. Hamilton was intent on attacking as soon as his forces had been reconfigured and reorganized and as soon as an adequate detailed plan was developed by his staff and accepted by the Navy. These preparations required a considerable period of time, during which the Turks continued to improve their defensive system on the peninsula. Had Hamilton attacked in March, he would have



faced only one Turkish division on the Peninsula. However, in his estimation, the risks of attacking without a systematic plan to off-load his disorganized forces from the transports onto a hostile shore were too great.

#### D. THE PLAN

All preparations were completed by 20 April for a landing on 23 April, but a storm delayed the landing until 25 April. The majority of the force was assembled at Port Mudros, while the Royal Naval Division and its transports had established a base at Skyros. The plan was to depart the anchorage two days before the assault to move to the operation zones. The day prior to the assault, the assault troops would be transferred to ships of the attendant force for each zone. Hours before the landing they would then be transferred to small boats.

The terrain of the Gallipoli Peninsula was unsuitable for rapid offensive operations against determined resistance. The area was underdeveloped, with a small population and little cultivation. There were few roads and an inadequate water supply. The weather on the Peninsula varies between extreme cold in winter and extreme heat in summer.

The operations area for the landing was dominated by a prominent heights, the most important for the Allied scheme of maneuver were Achi Baba, Sari Bahr and Kalid Bahr. The Turks had developed defenses on the Peninsula on the Kalid Bahr plateau, which was the key to control of the European forts at the Narrows. Entrenchments were extended from the plateau to Kakma Dagħ ridge to the north and to the hills of Achi Baba to the south. A forward line of entrenchments crossed the southern tip of the

Peninsula which included Achi Baba and the town of Krithia. (Corbett, 1920, p. 305)

The coastline consists of cliffs broken by rough gulleys leading into the interior. The few beaches suitable for landing operations were neither wide nor deep, barely suitable for support of the assault. Although the Turks had instituted a flexible defense, small contingents with machine guns protected by barbed wire were stationed at the most likely landing beaches.

### 1. Scheme of Maneuver

Landing on a hostile shore in the face of opposition required the development of specialized assault techniques. The size of the beaches and the shortage of small boats meant that the troops assigned to a particular beach must land in waves. The first waves were designated the "covering force;" they were to seize the beach and advance to a position to cover the completion of the landing. (Corbett, 1920, p. 312) Successive waves were to land to build up combat power, then advance inland to capture assigned objectives.

The units of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had the following assignments (James, 1965, pp. 85-89; Puleston, 1926, pp. 62-87; Hamilton, 1920, pp. 95-100):

29th Infantry Division: The covering force was to land at Cape Helles after sunrise at Y Beach (2,250 men in 2 waves), X Beach (3,050 men in 3 waves), W Beach (3,900 men in 4 waves), V Beach (3,200 men in 1 wave and via the *River Clyde*, and S Beach (800 men in 1 wave). The objective on the first day was to capture Achi Baba. Follow-on units of the Division were to

form the western end of the Allied front during the general advance to occupy Kalid Bahr and the Narrows forts.

ANZAC Corps: The covering force of 4,000 men in 3 waves was to begin landing at dawn 1 mile north of Gaba Tepe. The objective for the first day was to advance rapidly inland to capture the Sari Bair heights and Mal Tepe. These positions were to be subsequently reinforced to form a blocking force across the Peninsula to prevent Turkish reinforcements from reaching the landing at Cape Helles.

1st French Infantry Division: One regiment was to land at the town of Kum Kale on the Asiatic shore to capture coast artillery in order to prevent disruption of the landing at Cape Helles. The remainder of the Division was to conduct a demonstration in Bashika Bay to delay reinforcement of the Gallipoli Peninsula by Turkish troops deployed on the southern side of the Straits. Upon completion of these operations, the Division was to debark at Cape Helles to take position in the eastern end of the Allied front line in time for the general advance to occupy Kalid Bahr and to capture the Narrows forts.

Royal Naval Division: The Division was to conduct a demonstration in Xeros (Saros) Bay off of Bulair to delay Turkish reinforcement of the assault area in the south. Upon completion, the Division was to debark at Cape Helles to take position in the middle of the Allied front line in time for the general advance to occupy Kalid Bahr and to capture the Narrows forts.

The entire landing force was to be landed over a period of two-and-a-half days. The timetable for the main assault from Cape Helles was as follows (Boswell, 1965, p. 147):

Day 1: Land and take Achi Baba.

Day 2: Occupy Kilid Bahr plateau.

Day 3: Occupy the European forts at the Narrows.

Hamilton believed in a decentralized method of command and control to a fault. Once his plan was promulgated, his subordinate division commanders devised their own supporting plans. More crucially, once the landing had begun, the direction of the battle was in the hands of the division commanders. The campaign would suffer severe consequences for this detached involvement by the senior commander.

## 2. Supporting Forces

Sir Julian Corbett framed a theoretical doctrine concerning the composition of expeditionary forces based on the past practice of Great Britain. (Corbett, 1911, pp. 285-310) Under this doctrine the fleet not only must assure freedom of passage (working command of the sea), but must also perform duties of support. A combined expedition consists of four components: (1) the army, (2) the transports and landing craft, (3) escort ships for direct protection of the landing force and for "inshore work", and (4) the covering squadron. (Corbett, 1911, p. 289) These four components are functionally separate, but not necessarily physically separate. "But so essentially is. . . (a combined expedition). . . a single organism, that in practice these various elements can seldom be kept sharply distinct. They may be interwoven in the most intricate manner. Indeed to a greater or less extent each will always have to discharge some of the functions of the others." (Corbett, 1911, p. 289) Although joint doctrine was not approved by either service, the logic of



Corbett's framework was evident in the organization of the supporting forces. However, the ability of the combined force to act as a single organism was lost on both military and naval theater commanders and on the political leadership in London as the campaign unfolded.

*a. Naval Forces*

The enemy naval threat in the Eastern Mediterranean in April 1915 was negligible. Most of the Turkish navy was stationed to defend against the Russians, and was prevented from interdicting the landing by the mines in the Straits. Some torpedo boats were stationed at Smyrna, and had conducted some minor operations against Allied communications between Alexandria and the base at Port Mudros on Lemnos. The blockade of the Adriatic Sea by the elements of the French fleet prevented interference by Austrian submarines.

The Allied navy did not have specialized amphibious transports. Merchant ships taken up from trade served as both logistic and troop transports. A division required approximately twenty-five transports for troops, equipment, munitions, mules, and supplies. (Corbett, 1920, p. 308) The covering force of the assault waves were initially embarked in transports, then transferred to naval ships the day prior to the assault, as they provided greater protection to the troops as the force closed the shore.

The naval ships in the immediate theater and available for the operation were divided into squadrons, each squadron was assigned to a specific geographic zone of operations to support the initial landings. Each squadron was further divided into a "covering force" and an "attendant force." The ships of the "covering force" were to provide naval gunfire

support before and during the landing operations. The ships of the "attendant force" carried the advance echelons of the covering troops of the ground landing force (Corbett, 1920, pp. 312-313) At about three hours prior to the scheduled time ashore at a distance of five nautical miles from the beach, the troops would debark from the ships of the "attendant force" into lines of small boats which would be towed towards the shore by the ships of the "attendant force." At two-and-a-half nautical miles from the shore, steam launches would pick-up the tow. Finally, the small boats would be cast off fifty yards from shore and rowed to the beach through the surf line. (Hart, 1930, pp. 163-164)

One exception to the above method of ship-to-shore movement was the collier *River Clyde*. This vessel was modified with portals in the side of the hull. It was to be grounded on the beach and a causeway, supported by small boats, constructed onto the beach to allow troops to debark from the portals. The 2,000 troops of the second wave at V Beach were to be landed in this manner.

The organization of the Allied navy and assignments to zones of operations were as follows (Corbett, 1920, pp. 310-312):

First Squadron, consisting of eight battleships, four cruisers, and six fleet minesweepers, was to sortie from Port Mudros and support the 29th Division landing at Cape Helles.

Second Squadron, consisting of five battleships, one cruiser, eight destroyers, four trawlers, and three auxiliaries, was to sortie from Port Mudros and support the ANZAC Corps landing north of Gaba Tepe.

Third Squadron, consisting of one battleship, two cruisers, two destroyers, and two trawlers, was to sortie from Skyros and support the demonstration by the Royal Naval Division in Xeros Bay in front of Bulair.

Fourth Squadron, consisting of two cruisers and twelve trawlers, was to sortie from Port Mudros and be attached to the First Squadron.

Fifth Squadron, consisting of one battleship, ten destroyers, three minesweepers, and two trawlers (to lay anti-submarine nets), was to sortie from Port Mudros and operate inside the Straits to sweep mines and lay netting to protect the ships operating in the zones off Cape Helles and Kum Kale.

Sixth Squadron, consisting of three battleships, four cruisers, seven destroyers, and five torpedo boats, was to support the diversionary landing at Kum Kale by elements of the 1st French Division and concurrently support the demonstration by the remainder of the Division in Bashika Bay.

Seventh Squadron, consisting of four destroyers and one armed yacht, was to operate off the Turkish naval base at Smyrna to guard against torpedo boat attack.

*b. Air Forces*

Allied aircraft and balloons provided a limited amount of combat support. Total assets included eighteen British and eighteen French land planes based on the island of Tenedos, sea planes attached to the navy units, and ship-tethered observation balloons. The primary purpose of this rudimentary "air power" was for reconnaissance and gunfire spotting. There were some German aircraft on the Peninsula, but they were overwhelmed by the relatively larger numbers of Allied planes. The British also experimented

with methods of bombarding troops, which had mostly psychological effects against the enemy.

## **E. CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN**

The land campaign would last from the initial assault on 25 April 1915 until the evacuation on 9 January 1916, but in hindsight, it was lost in the first hours of the landing. A combination of bad luck, technical and tactical miscalculation, and major failures in command style and troop control contributed to the Allied loss in this campaign.

The first Allied troops ashore on the Gallipoli Peninsula were of the ANZAC Corps and they landed before dawn. The ship-to-shore movement was marred by confusion in the dark and an unexpected current which set the boats one mile north of the intended beach center. The first wave proceeded to move inland against light resistance as planned, but the unexpectedly rough terrain hindered the momentum of the advance. As the follow-on waves debarked at the same beach, they also attempted to advance inland to the desired objectives. Control over the battle could not be coordinated in the confusion; successful attacks could not be supported because the location of units was uncertain and communication was unreliable in the broken ground beyond the beach.

An intense counterattack by Turkish infantry at mid-day stopped the advance. Continued counterattacks supported by artillery allowed the Turks to regain lost ground. The Allies failed to coordinate the naval gunfire that was available. The close proximity of the enemy to friendly troops prevented effective fire to break up the Turkish counterattacks. By evening, both the Allied and Turkish troops on the front lines were exhausted, and the lines



stabilized. In the rear area on the beach, groups of soldiers that had become detached from their units and disoriented by the terrain caused further congestion making the landing of follow-on troops, supplies, and material difficult.

The landings at Cape Helles were timed to take place after dawn, preceded by naval bombardment of the landing beaches. This gunfire did not knock out a sufficient number of the machine gun emplacements at W Beach and V Beach. These two beaches were at the tip of the Peninsula, and considered the primary landings. As the first waves were decimated by machine gun fire and the survivors pinned to the beach, mental paralysis of the 29th Division commander, General Hunter-Weston focused his attention on disaster rather than opportunity.

The number of Turks actually opposite the landing forces was only at battalion strength, although this was unknown to the allies because of poor intelligence. The Allies had landed on a sufficiently wide front, so that the landings on Y Beach and S Beach met no opposition. Had these forces advanced aggressively inland they would have cut off the Turkish defenders and captured key terrain. However, the commanders of the landing forces at the beaches received no orders to advance during the day nor during the pre-landing briefings. Had the importance of seizing opportunity been communicated to these troop commanders, the nature of the entire campaign would have been altered. Instead, the troops at Y Beach made an unsuccessful attempt to link with the forces at X Beach to the south. Turkish reinforcements, moving to support the battle at V Beach, surprised the

disorganized British forces, and a withdrawal from the beach was effected the next morning without the knowledge of higher headquarters.

Hamilton had seen the opportunity at Y Beach from the deck of his command ship, but not wanting to interfere with his subordinate's direction of the battle, had merely sent a cryptic message to Hunter-Weston offering additional landing craft to support Y Beach. The division commander ignored the message and concentrated on the tough fight at V Beach and W Beach; as forces came available as they returned from the demonstrations at Bulair and Besika Bay, the British commanders reinforced failure at V Beach and W Beach rather than success at Y Beach and S Beach.

Prior to their insertion at Cape Helles, the Royal Naval Division and the 1st Division had demonstrated at Bulair and Besika Bay to confuse the enemy as to the intended main point of attack. These demonstrations had the desired effect. General von Sanders immediately went to Bulair upon being made aware of the landings in the south, and delayed major commitment of reserves in that direction as he waited for the perceived main attack to develop. (Hart, 1930, p. 173) Despite the delay, the Allied landings failed to gain ground against a few defenders.

The objective for the first day was to reach Achi Baba; all that was achieved was the capture of the beaches. The next day, additional troops were put ashore in preparation for an advance on 27 April. This attack made some gains, and consolidated rear area of the beachhead, but faltered in the face of fierce counterattacks by Turkish reserves before reaching the objective. The Allies had used up all available reserves of troops and ammunition in this effort, which had caused great casualties on both sides. Entrenchments were

constructed at both the ANZAC and Cape Helles beachheads, with the Turks also entrenching in close proximity to the Allied lines to deter the use of naval bombardment.

Positions remained static while Hamilton pleaded with Kitchener for replacements for the losses that the M.E.F. had sustained, and for adequate reinforcements, supplies, and material to resume the offensive. No additional forces were forthcoming for a period of six weeks, and the Gallipoli Peninsula became a microcosm of the trench warfare of the Western Front. On 6 August Hamilton attempted to regain the offensive on the ground with a main attack out of the ANZAC beachhead and landings of two New Army divisions in Sulva Bay. Although the beachhead was expanded along the coast, the Turks continued to hold the crucial terrain in the interior. Hamilton was relieved in October and replaced by General Sir Charles Monro. After an assessment of the situation, and despite a proposal by the Chief of Staff of the fleet, Commodore Keyes, to renew the naval attacks in the Straits, Monro recommended to Kitchener an evacuation of the Peninsula. The request to evacuate was approved on 23 November; a detailed plan was devised and Allied forces were evacuated, with no casualties, on 8-9 January 1916.

## **F. ANALYSIS**

The Turkish campaign of 1915 was based on a brilliant and feasible strategic concept. However, through indecision at both the strategic and tactical levels, the campaign resulted in failure. This can be in part ascribed to a lack of an operational perspective at all levels of leadership. The following

analysis of how British strategic direction and the theater of operations led to a plan which provided a framework for the conduct of the campaign.

A unified military organization to administrate Great Britain's armed forces did not exist in 1915. The lowest permanent level of coordination between the services was at the cabinet level of the government. At the cabinet level, the armed forces were unified, both administratively, through the War Minister and the First Sea Lord, and operationally, through the efforts of the Committee of Imperial Defense. As is usually the case in democratic systems of government, strategic direction was often a matter of partisan domestic politics as much as international politics. By the early Twentieth Century, the increasingly complex business of government led to a larger bureaucracy, more subject to political infighting than in the days of William Pitt.

Despite the lack of consistent centralized direction, relations between army and navy officers was characterized by cooperation and mutual high regard. Additionally, although a systematic joint doctrine was not in effect, British theorists had written on the subject. It appears that in this case there was no direct correlation between the absence of a formal administrative and operational unified military organization and the ability of British army and naval officers to plan and organize a joint operation in a maritime theater.

The indecisiveness of the political and military leadership at the strategic level resulted in a misallocation of forces to the East Mediterranean theater of operations. The concept of an operation to capture the center of Turkish political, military, and economic power to reduce pressure on British imperial possessions and open communications with Russia was sound, although it



could have no direct effect on the situation facing the Entente on either the Western or Eastern Fronts. However, the means required were not adequately considered. Since the plan originated in the Admiralty, only naval forces were initially available to capture Constantinople. The naval attacks to force the Straits failed, so army forces were then committed to the theater. The flawed deployment of these forces from Great Britain was the cause of a further delay in operations, because of the requirement to unload and reembark the forces in Egypt. Ground operations then became the sole focus of military effort in the theater. The long delay between the initial naval attacks and the subsequent ground force attack allowed the Turks to strengthen the defenses in the theater, which contributed to the failure of the eventual ground force attack. These ineffective and sequential naval-then-ground operations were the result of the indecision of the high-level political-military leadership. Thus, the theater was established to organize military operations to gain a strategic objective, but it was misused as a tool to match the ends and means of national strategy.

The combination of a lack of a high-level joint service organization to promote the type of operation required to succeed in Turkey and the uncertain allocation of forces to the theater over a period of time, led to a mismatch between the capabilities of forces assigned and the campaign objectives. This mismatch may have contributed to the failure of the military leadership in the theater to exploit the advantages of ground force and naval force cooperation.

Even after the failure of the naval-only operation to force the Straits, a plan oriented to a more aggressive cooperation between the services may

have defeated von Sanders' flexible defense. Possibilities included: (1) the coordination of naval gunfire support and improved spotting procedures which could have been the margin of difference in subsequent ground operations; (2) the mobility and flexibility of ground forces in the entire theater, which could have been enhanced by the utilization of naval forces to assist in maneuver; and (3) the improved minesweeping techniques developed by the Royal Navy, after the removal of civilian personnel from those operations, which may have then allowed the fleet to force a passage through the Straits.

Without these improvements, Hamilton's plan still might have succeeded. He organized his forces carefully and developed a close cooperation between ground and naval forces for the assault through decentralized organization into integrated task groups for each beach. However, this desirable principle of decentralization was carried too far in combat, when Hamilton allowed his subordinates to concentrate on immediate and narrow concerns and did not override their actions by taking bold and decisive action at Y Beach to alter the original plan for the assault.

In the final analysis, victory in the Turkish campaign was not beyond the reach of the British. Indecisiveness at the strategic level led to the theater commanders having to contend with additional obstacles. The ensuing joint operational plan was adequate, but it did not meet the test of combat because of a rigid command style and the failure of subordinate commanders to comprehend the overall intent of the operation.

Some thought that the lesson of the Gallipoli landings was that joint operations were not effective in most any situation. Thirty-five years later,

the German campaign in Norway proved otherwise, when they combined ground, sea, and air forces in a brilliantly successful military operation.

### III. THE GERMAN CAMPAIGN IN NORWAY, 1940

The probability of Germany successfully conquering Norway in early 1940 seemed remote. Economically essential to Germany's war effort, Norway was not contiguous to Germany, and therefore thought to be safe from the threat of the German army. The German fleet was small, and designed primarily for commerce raiding and coastal defense rather than sea control and power projection. The combination of land, sea, and air power, integrated by a flexible plan, contributed to this German success, illustrating the potential of a joint service campaign in a maritime theater of operations by an armed force dominated by the army.

#### A. GERMAN JOINT SERVICE ORGANIZATION

A revolution in military organizational concepts occurred in the 1930s when Germany created the Armed Forces High Command (OKW); this separate headquarters lay above the Army High Command (OKH), the Navy High Command (OKM), and the Air Force High Command (OKL). (Warlimont, "Reflections", 1979, p. 30) The OKW had dual functions: to coordinate the strategic operations of the three services and to ensure an adequate allocation of Germany's economic resources to each service. (Warlimont, "Reflections", 1979, p. 31) As OKW was originally conceived, the head of the OKW had both command and ministerial functions as the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and as the Reich Defense Minister. The OKW was to be both an interface between the political and economic



sectors for the armed forces, and a centralized agency to direct the efforts of the three services.

On 4 February 1938, Adolf Hitler assumed "...direct command powers over the entire Wehrmacht in person." (Warlimont, "Commentary", 1979, p. 15) OKW was designated to serve as Hitler's military staff. The consequences of this action served to combine the head of state and the head of the armed forces in one man. The OKW was never given a chance to function in a war as intended at its inception because after February 1938 each of the armed service chiefs reported directly to Hitler. The German military as a result was unified in the person of the head of state, rather than in the organization of the OKW. The lack of a unifying agency in the German armed forces during the 1939-1945 war left Germany without a consistent military strategy and with unresolved inter-service rivalries.

The Norwegian Campaign serves as a prime example of an inconsistent military strategy. It was almost an afterthought to the prosecution of the war in the west. Of the many unique characteristics of the campaign, one that stands out is the role of the OKW and the combined use of the armed services. An inter-service staff was formed within OKW to plan and conduct the campaign, and each of the services played a prominent role during the subsequent fighting. However, the success of this joint service task force was due only in part to the centralized planning of the OKW staff. It can mostly be attributed to the professionalism of the officer corps of the German armed forces leading to an attitude of cooperation among unit commanders and staff officers (Van der Porten, 1969, p. 66)

## B. THE THEATER OF OPERATIONS

The campaign in Norway and Denmark in 1940 is an example of a brilliant combined operation in both plan and execution. An understanding of some of the issues considered in the deliberations of the German political and military leadership which led to the decision to conduct a combined operation in a maritime theater will result in a greater appreciation of the plan. Some of the considerations of the German leadership can be grouped into three categories: (1) economic considerations of ensuring the continued transport of Swedish iron ore through Narvik, Norway; (2) political-military considerations of future enemy actions; and (3) strategic-military considerations concerning the conduct of the war.

### 1. Economic Considerations

Sweden was a principal source of iron ore for German industry. Germany had contracted with Sweden to provide ten million tons of iron ore during 1940, and with Norway to provide one to two million tons. The main source of iron ore in Sweden came from the Kiruna-Gallivare district in the north near the Finnish boarder. The bulk of the ore was shipped through the port of Lulea, on the Gulf of Bothnia ("the Baltic route"); however, from mid-December to mid-April, that port was closed by ice. This would leave a two million ton shortfall, enough to bring German industry to a standstill. Ore could also be transported from Sweden into the town of Narvik, Norway by railroad, then loaded onto ships and brought down the intercoastal waterway known as the Inner Leads without leaving the territorial waters of neutral Norway and therefore out of the legal reach of the British navy. (Butler, 1957, pp. 91-92) The German Naval Staff believed that maintenance of Norwegian

neutrality was the most effective means of protecting vital German ore shipments. (Admiralty, 1948, p. 3)

## **2. Political-Military Considerations**

The neutrality of Norway could be threatened by enemy actions and have adverse political-military consequences. After war was declared in the Autumn of 1939, the British and French governments first assumed that German economy was too weak to support a prolonged war. Second, they wished to deter Germany from attacking into France and the Low Countries. To act on the assumption of a weak Germany, the Allies sought the means to further weaken the German economy by depriving it of vital resources needed for its war industries. To deter a German attack to the west, they began to reinforce the Allied armies on the continent. Additionally, the Allies believed that fighting on a secondary front would be preferable to fighting in France.

The possibility of an expedition to Narvik and Trondheim held the attention of the British planners. A force could establish bases and capture the ore loading facilities while out of the effective reach of German air and sea power. The existence of Allied forces in Scandinavia could entice Germany to commit forces into Sweden and Southern Norway, reducing available manpower for an invasion of France. Another possibility was to lay mines in the Leads, forcing the ore ships out of protected waters onto the high seas. Either action would be a violation of Norway's neutrality; Allied diplomats, however, could not convince Norway to repudiate that neutrality.

Finland appealed to the League of Nations for assistance after the Soviets initiated hostilities on 30 November 1939 and caused Britain and

France to pledge their support to her. The Allies then faced the same situation as two months earlier during the German attack on Poland--the direct route through the Baltic was controlled by Germany. The British combined staff, in conjunction with French military planners, drew up plans to land three brigades (two British and one French) in Norway in March 1940. (Butler, 1957, p. 109; Mouton, 1967, p. 50) The objective of this expedition was to aid Finland and to simultaneously ensure that the Gullivare ore fields were denied to Germany and the Soviet Union for as long as possible. This was to be accomplished by securing a base at Narvik, capturing the railroad into Sweden, and concentrating a force in Swedish territory at a location allowing it to accomplish the "ultimate objective." (Butler, 1957, p. 113) The reaction of Norway and Sweden to the violation of their neutrality was hoped to be mild. The Allied operation was cancelled when the Finns accepted Soviet terms for ending the war on 13 March 1940. (Butler, 1957, p. 113)

Convinced that political considerations would prevent them from taking aggressive action, the Allies developed two plans which they could execute in reaction to any potential German occupation. One was Plan Wilfred, the mining of the Leads. The other was Plan R 4, the transport of troops to Trondheim and Narvik to aid the Norwegians if attacked by Germany. The Allies did not believe that it would be possible for the Germans to land forces in northern Norway at the onset of a campaign, thus they would have sufficient time to load forces and material in Britain, transport and land them in Norway, and organize a defense before the North was threatened by German forces.



### 3. German Military Considerations

It can be seen that the Germans were justifiably concerned about Allied actions in Scandinavia. The service High Commands, however, generally did not consider a Scandinavian offensive feasible, and preferred to rely on the high probability of the Allies' honoring Scandinavian neutrality.

In a conference with the commanders in chief and chiefs of staff of the three services on 27 September 1939, Hitler disclosed his intention to launch an attack on the west as early as possible in 1939. (Greiner, 1979, p. 1) Most resistance in Poland had ceased on that date. His plan was delineated in "Directive No. 6 for the Conduct of the War" dated 9 October 1939. If England and France were not willing to make peace, then Germany must "act vigorously and aggressively without delay." (Department of State, 1954, p. 248) Preparations were to begin immediately for an attack into Luxembourg, Belgium, and Holland "with as much strength and as early a date as possible." (Department of State, 1954, p. 249) The objective was to "defeat as strong a part of the French operational army as possible, as well as the allies fighting by its side, and at the same time to gain as large an area as possible in Holland, Belgium, and Northern France. . ." (Department of State, 1954, p. 249) The occupied territory was to serve two purposes: first as a base for an air and sea war against Britain, and second as a buffer zone for the Ruhr industrial area. (Department of State, 1954, p. 249)

The Army High Command (OKH) concerned itself with devising a plan which would accomplish this objective without the attack degenerating into the stalemate of 1914. A plan was readied and on 10 January 1940 Hitler decided to commence the attack on 17 January. The plan was compromised

when a copy of the plan was recovered from a German Air Force plane that had been forced to land in Belgium; this incident, combined with the onset of bad weather, led to the cancellation of the venture on 13 January. This gave the OKH the opportunity to devise "Plan Yellow" to be executed in the spring. (Mearshimer, 1983, Ch. 4) The air force, assigned a strategic role in Directive No. 6, was equipped primarily to provide tactical air support to the army. Both the army and air force, therefore, emphasized preparations for an offensive on the western front.

Admiral Raeder, the Commander in Chief of the Navy, was not satisfied with the land attack strategy. Assigned responsibility for conducting a sea war against Britain at the conclusion of the campaign, he did not think that the bases that would be gained on the Belgian coast would be adequate for the task. He perceived that the German navy would find itself confined to the North Sea by the British navy as in 1914-1918. (Kennedy, 1983, p. 300) Raeder discussed the strategic significance of Norway with Hitler in the prosecution of a sea war against Britain on 10 October 1939. (Admiralty, 1948, p. 1) Earlier that month, Raeder and the Naval Staff concluded that Trondheim and Narvik were the best locations for bases, but that neither the navy would be strong enough to use them effectively, nor the army strong enough to defend them, given its continental commitments. An additional consideration was that, "(Although). . . the occupation of Norwegian bases would extend the operational base for German naval and air forces activity against England. . . (the). . . Naval Staff was nevertheless aware that the strategic value of this extension must not be over-rated. The centre of gravity of German naval warfare on England was the Atlantic; Norway was far from

the Atlantic and separated from it by the patrol lines Scotland-Iceland and Greenland, which was easily watched by the English." (Admiralty, 1948, p. 1)

Another possible consequence of German inaction during a British occupation of Norway would be a large infusion of Allied forces into Scandinavia. Hitler was concerned that this would undermine the security of Germany's Baltic flank. (Ziemke in *Command Decisions*, 1959, p. 57)

The navy appreciated the importance of Norway, but believed it beyond their grasp. The conclusion reached by the Naval Staff was that Norwegian neutrality must be promoted; if such actions were unsuccessful, then Norway must be denied to the British.

## C DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

### 1. Initial Planning

Despite the strong arguments against German military action in Scandinavia, Hitler became concerned in January 1940 about the possibility of British intervention in Norway as a result of the Russo-Finnish War. Raeder had continued to warn him of the consequences of British presence in Norway. Hitler ordered the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) to conduct an investigation entitled *Studie Nord* which considered an operation in Norway, based on the premise that Germany could not allow the British to control any part of Scandinavia.

Each service was required to submit opinions of the study; the Naval Staff had two important findings. First, surprise would be an essential element for a successful Norwegian operation. Second, if naval combatants were utilized as fast transports for army units, then a number of important Norwegian ports could be occupied simultaneously. (Ziemke in *Command*

Decisions, 1959, pp, 48-49) Both of these aspects would be incorporated into the final plan, and would contribute to the ultimate victory. It would work to minimize Norwegian resistance and foil British assistance.

The Air Force was initially tasked to develop an operational plan based on the study, and when the offense in the west was postponed until the spring, Hitler decided that the Norwegian operation required increased attention. All further work on the plan was to be done by a special working staff within OKW. The working staff was formed on 5 February 1940 as a section of the OKW Operations Staff. Captain Theodor Krancke of the navy was the senior officer assigned. (Ziemke in Command Decisions, 1959, pp. 49-50)

In three weeks, Krancke and his staff developed a detailed operational plan which identified the principal objectives of the offensive. Simultaneous landings were to occur at Oslo, Kristiansand, Arendal, Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim, and Narvik. The assault waves were to be transported primarily by aircraft and partly by ship. The objectives selected included the major centers of population, and therefore the mobilization base of the Norwegian Army. Once the population and weapon arsenals were under German control, any internal resistance would be ineffective. (Ziemke in Command Decisions, 1959, pp. 50-51) Detailed intelligence regarding the Norwegian coast defenses, hydrographic characteristics of the landing sites, and specific terrain were difficult to obtain. Additionally, all preparations were carried out in great secrecy compounding the problem of acquiring information.

Command of the forces was assigned to Lieutenant General Nikolaus von Falkenhorst, Commanding General, XXI Corps. Under his direction,



planning for the Norwegian operation continued using the Krancke Plan as the basis.

Continued planning resulted in two major departures from the original concept. The first departure was the inclusion of an occupation of Denmark. Studie Nord had indicated that air and naval bases on the tip of the Jutland peninsula would facilitate control of the Danish Straits. Also, the ability to refuel transport aircraft in Denmark, rather than in Germany, would extend the potential range of the aircraft within Norway. The original intention was to acquire basing rights from Denmark through diplomatic channels. It was decided that such an important matter, upon which the success of the operation might depend, could not be left to chance. A plan to occupy Denmark was presented to the OKW Chief of Staff by von Falkenhorst and was accepted.

The second departure concerned the relationship of operations in Norway with intended operations in the west. The Krancke Plan had been based on the assumption that the Norwegian operation would occur either before or after the western offensive. Hitler approved the request by the OKW Operations Officer, General Jodl, that both campaigns be planned so as to be independent of one another. A major revision to the planning was required: the number of paratroop units was reduced to four companies rather than a division.

## 2. The Directive

The "Directive for 'Fall Weseruebung'" was issued by the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces on 1 March 1940. It began by stating that, "The development of the Situation in Scandinavia required the making of all

preparations for the occupation of Denmark and Norway by a part of the German Armed Forces." (Longsum, 1958, p. 33) There were three objectives of the operation: "prevent British encroachment on Scandinavia and the Baltic"; "Guarantee our ore base in Sweden"; and "give our Navy and Air Force a wider start line against Britain." (Longsum, 1958, p. 33) The role of the Navy and Air Force in the operation were specifically mentioned, namely "to protect the operation against the interference of British naval and air striking forces." (Longsum, 1958, p. 33)

Two concepts were next mentioned in the directive. First, as a result of the disparity between the political-military power of Germany and the Scandinavian States, the forces employed would be as small as possible. This would lead to numerical weakness which was to be "balanced by our daring actions and surprise execution." (Longsum, 1958, p. 33) Second, the operation was to appear as a peaceful occupation to protect the neutrality of Scandinavian States. "Corresponding demands will be transmitted to the Governments at the beginning of the occupation." (Longsum, 1958, p. 33)

The command relationships between the forces participating in the operation were then explained in the directive. General von Falkenhorst was to command "Group XXI" and be responsible for the preparation and conduct of the operation. He was to serve directly under the orders of Hitler. All forces selected to participate in the operation were under separate command and were not to be allocated to any other operational theaters. Air Force units specifically assigned to the operation were under the tactical control of Group XXI, then were to revert back to the control of the Commander in Chief of the Air Force. A most significant passage concerning joint service command

relationships stated that, "The employment of the forces which are under direct Naval and Air Force command will take place in agreement with the Commander of Group XXI." (Longsum, 1958, p. 34)

The directive continues with the mission of the assigned forces. The movement into Denmark and the landings in Norway were to take place simultaneously. The operation was to be prepared as quickly as possible, so that if Allies seized the initiative, the Germans would be able to counterattack immediately. The importance of surprise was again stressed in regards to both the Scandinavian States and the Western opponents. Secrecy was required for all preparations. (Longsum, 1958, p. 34)

The last part of the directive served to split the operation into two parts: the occupation of Denmark (Weseruebung Sued) and the occupation of Norway (Weseruebung Nord). A number of geographic objectives and general tasks were assigned to the forces allocated to each operation. (Longsum, 1958, p. 35) Finally, two code names were assigned: "Wesertag" was to be the day of the operation (W-Day) and "Weserzeit" was to be the hour of the operation (W-Hour). (Longsum, 1958, p. 35)

### **3. Continued Planning**

Political planning had to parallel the military preparations for Fall Weseruebung. The National Defense Branch of the Operations Staff of OKW prepared the documents that were to be presented to the respective governments. The German civilian foreign service representatives were notified just previous to W-Day in order to preserve secrecy. The foreign service officials then presented the German demands to the governments of

Norway and Denmark fifteen minutes prior to W-Hour. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 38-39)

One result of this directive with the German military was to make detailed planning difficult for the operational units. The plans had to be closely held and troops could not be briefed as to their objectives. There were four possible political conditions which operational plans had to take into account: "'Denmark and Norway: no resistance'; 'Denmark and Norway: resistance'; Denmark: no resistance/Norway: resistance'; and 'Denmark: resistance/Norway: no resistance'." (Morzik, 1961, p. 94) This was especially critical for the Air Force transport command; navigational plans and refueling schedules as well as the logistic support required by ground troops and levels of reinforcement could vary considerably depending upon the contingency. The solution was to prepare four separate and complete operation orders.

Command relationships between Group XXI and air force units as organized in the directive were altered after the OKL protested: the Air Force would retain tactical control and command of its units. Group XXI was to command only the six divisions allocated to the ground forces, supported by air force and navy units. The OKL and OKM conducted coordinated independent planning with Group XXI, assigning operational control of air force and naval units to separate commands. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, p. 30)

Generaleutenant Hans Griesler commanded the X Air Corps, to which all air units were assigned. The X Air Corps consisted of a cadre of two bomber wings; for Fall Weseruebung, a reconnaissance squadron, two



additional bomber wings, one twin engine fighter wing, one fighter group, one coast reconnaissance and naval support group, four special transport wings, and one seaplane transport group were attached. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 5-6) Airborne, parachute, and logistic operations were to be planned and conducted by two subordinate commands, Chief of Air Transport (Land) and Chief of Air Transport (Sea). (Morzik, 1961, p. 36)

Naval units were under the control of either Naval Group West, if in the North Sea and off Norway, or Naval Group East, if in the Baltic or Danish Straits. Command relationships were further altered when XXXI Corps, under General Leonhard Kaupisch of the Air Force, was directed to plan and direct operations in Denmark. XXXI Corps was to be subordinate to Group XXI until W plus 3 days, then revert to OKH control. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, p. 30-31)

#### D. THE PLAN

The plan and the conduct of Fall Weseruebung was shaped by the terrain of Norway and Denmark. Most of the Norwegian population lived along the coast in the larger towns and cities. The interior of the country is mountainous, and had sparse rail and road communications. From Oslo, in southern Norway, two narrow river valleys cut north towards Trondheim and the coast of central Norway: the Gudbrandsdal and the Osterdal. The easiest access to the northern part of Norway was by sea.

The terrain of Denmark was ideal for a rapid movement over land from the German border to seize the Jutland peninsula. Copenhagen and other strategic points were on islands and had to be taken by attacks of combined forces transported by sea and air.

## 1. Scheme of Maneuver

The units allocated to Weseruebung Nord had the following assignments (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 33-35):

139th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division: On W-Day, this unit was to debark from Assault Group 1 in Narvik and take control of the town. As soon as possible, forces were to move inland and up to the Swedish border to control the ore railline from Sweden. The 138th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division, when released from conducting operations in the Trondheim area, was to reinforce the units holding the Narvik sector.

138th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division: On W-Day, this unit was to debark from Assault Group 2 in Trondheim and take control of the immediate area. Beginning on W plus 7 days, elements of the 196th Infantry Division proceeding overland from Oslo were to relieve the 138th Regiment in Trondheim. Upon relief, the unit was to proceed to Narvik when transport was available.

69th Infantry Division: On W-Day, two battalions were to debark from Assault Group 3 at Bergen; two battalions were to land at Stavanger by air transport; the Division bicycle troop was to debark from Assault Group 6 at Egersund. On W plus 1 day, three battalions were to reinforce Stavanger by air. On W plus 1 and W plus 2 days, the remainder of the Division was to debark at Oslo and proceed overland by rail to Bergen, passing through the 163rd and 196th Divisions in the vicinity of Oslo. The elements in Stavanger were to be relieved by elements of the 214th Division. Until the operation is completed, the Division was to occupy the zone from Nordfiord to Egersund.

163rd Infantry Division: On W-Day, one battalion was to debark from Assault Group 4 at Kristiansand (to be reinforced at approximately W plus 7 hours by two battalions); the Division bicycle troop was to debark from Assault Group 4 at Arendal; two battalions were to debark from Assault Group 5 at Oslo; and two battalions were to conduct an air assault of Fornebu Airfield (in the vicinity of Oslo). As the situation was to develop, elements of this Division were to gain control of Oslo, the zone to the West of Oslo Fiord, and the zone to the North of Oslo in the vicinity of Lillestrom.

196th Infantry Division: This unit was to debark at Oslo on W plus 2 days. It was to pass through the 163rd Division; two regiments were to take the zone to the north of Oslo in the vicinity of Lillehammer, while the other regiment was to proceed to Andalsnes via railroad as soon as possible. The remainder of the Division was to be relieved on W plus 7 days by elements of the 181st Division, and then move to the north to occupy the zone from Trondheim to Mosjoen to Andalsnes, relieving the 138th Regiment, 3rd Mountain Division in Trondheim.

181st Infantry Division: This unit was to debark at Oslo on W plus 6 days. The Division was to secure the zone to the east of Oslo up to the Swedish border. One regiment was to relieve elements of 163rd Division in the vicinity of Lillestrom, and one regiment was to relieve units of 196th Division in the vicinity of Lillehammer.

214th Infantry Division: This unit was to debark at Oslo on W plus 8 days. The Division was to proceed to Stavanger and Kristiansand to relieve elements of the 69th and 163rd Divisions. Until completion of the operation,

it was to provide security for the southwest coast in a zone from Stavanger to Arendal.

The units allocated to Weseruebung Sued had the following assignments (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 35-36):

170th Infantry Division: On W-Day, one regiment (motorized) was to protect the left flank of the 11th Motorized Brigade in its advance to capture the airfields at Aalborg. Three reinforced companies were to debark from Assault Group 9 and capture the bridge at Middlefart, then proceed to Nyborg. The remainder of the Division was to secure the Danish mainland, reaching Skagen and Fredrikshaven no later than W plus 2 days.

11th Motorized Brigade: On W-Day, this unit was to advance to Aalborg to support the air assault battalion holding the airfields.

198th Infantry Division: On W-Day, one reinforced battalion was to debark from Assault Group 7, one company was to land at Nyborg to capture the crossing of the Great Belt, the remainder were to land at Korsor to proceed overland to Copenhagen; one battalion was to proceed by ferry and armored train along the route Warnemuende to Gedser to Copenhagen, passing through the parachute company (minus) holding the bridge at Vordingborg.

## **2. Supporting Forces**

Given the operational objectives and the terrain features of the theater, in this campaign the success or failure rested with the ability of the ground forces to occupy and then defend Norway. The navy and the air force supported the ground force scheme of maneuver through direct and indirect combat support and through transportation of both assault and follow-on forces and of logistics support.



a. *Naval Forces*

Given the numerical strength of the British navy, the German navy could not successfully wage a naval campaign to gain sea control prior to assault operations, as is the doctrine used by maritime powers. Therefore, the opportunities for the German navy to provide direct combat support were limited. The German navy's indirect combat support of Fall Weseruebung was in three parts. First, attain temporary local "sea control" through a combination of deception, speed of movement, and decoy operations. Second, use U-Boats and land-based aircraft to deny the British absolute freedom of the seas. Third, protect the sea lines of communications leading from the German sea ports on the Baltic coast through the Danish Straits to Oslo.

Both surface ships and submarines conducted indirect support during the campaign. Two battleships, the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau*, after escorting two assault transport groups, attempted to decoy elements of the British fleet by posing as commerce raiders breaking-out into the Atlantic. Operation Harmut was the plan to protect the surface ships and beachheads during Fall Weseruebung from British naval attacks with twenty-eight U-Boats. They were in position by W minus 2 days in the following positions: five off Narvik, two off Trondheim, three off Bergen, two off Stavanger, three north-east of the Shetland Islands, four south-west of the Shetland Islands, four in Pentland Firth, and three in the eastern sector of the English Channel. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, p. 30; Butler, 1957, p. 9)

Military planners allocate adequate transport and logistic support to the appropriate forces needed to implement the operational plan. As

Norway was in a maritime theater in relation to Germany, planners for Fall Weseruebung had to calculate air lift and sea lift requirements for both the assault forces and follow-on forces. The number of combat forces required to defeat enemy opposition and attain operational objectives had to be balanced with the capabilities and capacities of available transport over a period of time. Developing a time line to match the scheme of maneuver with lift requirements for assault and follow-on forces unified seemingly different aspects of the campaign.

One method to construct a time line is to search for the type of unit with the "lowest common denominator" in the time and distance relationship. When projecting power into a maritime theater, the slowest forces will move by sea; and for Fall Weseruebung, the farthest distance from Germany to an objective was to Narvik. Transport aircraft, the fastest means of transport, did not have the required unrefueled range to reach Narvik. In order to minimize exposure of assault transports, and still meet the requirement for a simultaneous landing, combatant ships were to be used as assault transports. However, they were limited in capacity, so slower transport ships carrying heavy equipment, munitions, and provisions were staged near the farthest objectives. These ships were to leave Germany no earlier than W minus 6 days so that secrecy could be preserved for as long as possible. (Admiralty, 1948, pp. 12-13)

One group of seven ships was organized into the Export Echelon and distributed as follows: three to Narvik, three to Trondheim, and one to Stavanger. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, p. 28) The problem of refueling the combatants being used as assault transports for the return trip to

their home ports and of meeting the fuel requirements for the occupation forces was to be solved by the Tanker Echelon. This was a group of eight ships distributed as follows: two to Narvik, one to Trondheim (both to reach their destinations prior to W Day), and the remainder were assigned to Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, and Kristiansand (all to reach their destinations on W day). (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 28-29)

The greatest amount of tonnage required to build up combat power in Norway was carried in eight Sea Transport Echelons. On W day, the 1st sea Transport Echelon of fifteen ships would reach Oslo, Kristiansand, Bergen, and Stavanger. The seven remaining Sea Transport Echelons had the destination of Oslo on the following schedule: W plus 2 days for the 2nd Sea Transport Echelon of eleven ships; W plus 6 days for the 3rd Sea Transport Echelon of thirteen ships; and between W plus 8 and W plus 12 days the 4th through 8th Sea Transport Echelons, using returned ships from the previous three units. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, p. 29)

For the Weseruebung Nord assault operations, the naval units participating were organized and assigned missions as follows (Admiralty, 1948, pp. 10-11; Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 27-28):

Assault Group 1 consisting of ten destroyers: The 138th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division was to be embarked for transport to Narvik. The Group was to proceed in company with the battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and Assault Group 2 until it reached the vicinity of Trondheim, and then it was to proceed independently to Narvik.

Assault Group 2 consisting of the cruiser *Hipper* and four destroyers: The 139th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division was to be

embarked for transport to Trondheim. The Group was to proceed in company with the battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and Assault Group 1 until it reached the vicinity of Trondheim, and then it was to detach; it was then to maneuver to seaward until the time came to make the final approach to Trondheim to meet W-Hour.

Assault Group 3 consisting of the cruisers *Koeln* and *Koengsberg*, the auxiliaries *Bremse* and *Karl Peters*, three torpedo boats, and five motor torpedo boats: One battalion of the 69th division was to be embarked for transport to Bergen.

Assault Group 4 consisting of the cruiser *Karlsruhe*, the auxiliary *Tsingtau*, three torpedo boats, and seven motor torpedo boats: One battalion and the bicycle squadron of the 163rd Division was to be embarked for transport to Kristiansand and Arendal.

Assault Group 5 consisting of the cruisers *Bluecher*, *Luetzow*, and *Emden*, three torpedo boats, two armed whaling boats, and eight minesweepers: Two battalions of the 163rd Division were to be embarked for transport to Oslo.

Assault Group 6 consisting of four minesweepers: The bicycle squadron of the 69th Division was to be embarked for transport to Egersund.

For the Weseruebung Sued assault operations, the naval units participating were organized and assigned missions as follows (Admiralty, 1948, pp. 10-11; Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 27-28).

Assault Group 7 consisting of the battleship *Schleswig-Holstien* and various auxiliaries: A reinforced battalion of the 198th Division was to embark at Kiel for transport to Nyborg and Korsor.



Assault Group 8 consisting of the steamer *Hansestadt Danzig* and two patrol vessels: One battalion of the 198th division was to embark at Kiel for transport to Copenhagen.

Assault Group 9 consisting of the minelayer *Rugard* and various small craft: Three reinforced companies of the 170th Division were to embark at Kiel for transport to Middlefart.

Assault Group 10 consisting of light naval forces from Cuxhaven: This Group was to secure Thyboron from seaward and meet elements of the 170th Division advancing overland.

Assault Group 11 consisting of light naval forces from Cuxhaven: This Group was to secure Esberg from seaward and meet elements of the 170th Division advancing overland.

**b. Air Forces**

The air strategy provided both direct and indirect combat support to ground and naval units by conducting close air support, interdiction, and demonstration missions. Assignments for X Air Corps bomber and fighter forces were as follows (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 36-38):

Bombers: The main bomber force was to be held as a ready reserve to combat the British navy if it sortied. One bomber squadron was to deploy to the Stavanger airfield on W-Day to interdict any attempt by the British navy to attack the beachheads on the west coast of Norway. One bomber squadron was to deploy to Fornebu Airfield, in the vicinity of Oslo, when that location was secured; it was to provide ground support during the remainder of the campaign. One bomber group was to provide ground support for the advance into Jutland. Three bomber groups were to conduct

demonstrations at the following locations: Oslo, the Kristiansand-Bergen sector, and Copenhagen.

Fighters: One group (less 15 planes) was to support the airborne assault at Aalborg; once that location was secured, it was to operate to protect air transports between Aalborg, Stavanger, and Oslo. Three flights of five planes each were to support landings at Oslo, Stavanger, and Copenhagen; upon completion, the Oslo and Stavanger flights were to remain at that location to conduct further operations, and the Copenhagen flight was to operate from Aalborg.

The two types of assault troops that the air force moved in the early hours of the campaign were parachute troops and airborne troops. The paratroops for Weseruebung Nord were assigned the following mission: On W-Day, two companies were to land at Fornebu airfield, in the vicinity of Oslo, to secure an airhead for the follow-on landing of two air assault battalions from the 163rd Division. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 33-34) The paratroops for Weseruebung Sued were assigned the following mission : On W-Day at W plus 2 hours, one platoon was to land at the Aalborg airfields to secure them for the landing of a follow-on air assault battalion; and one company (minus) was to secure the bridge at Vordingborg to open the route for elements of the 198th Division advancing to Copenhagen. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, pp. 35-36)

Air Transport command (Land), in addition to providing air lift for assault operations, was assigned a crucial role in meeting requirements for timely reinforcement and resupply at both critical points and at distant objectives after the initial assault. Once bases were established on Norwegian

territory, German transports had sufficient range to cover the entire country. The enemy anti-air threat was assessed to be negligible, so that the German air force was expected to gain control of the air over Norway early in the campaign.

## E. CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN

A number of incidents, such as the actions of the *HMS Cossack* during the *Altmark* affair, convinced Hitler that a British invasion of Norway was imminent and that he had to preempt it. On 1 April, after a thorough review of the plan for Fall Weseruebung, he designated 9 April as W-Day, and 0515 hours as W-Hour.

The Danish government capitulated to Germany's demands, and Denmark was occupied as planned on W-Day. The King of Denmark was prevented from leaving the country, so the Germans were able to obtain an agreement from the legitimate leader of the Danish government to capitulate. Negotiations to demobilize the Danish armed forces began on 9 April. (Ziemke, German Northern Theater, 1959, p. 62)

In Norway, the isolation of the political center of the country was not effective: the King was able to evade capture and the Commander in Chief of the Norwegian Army began to organize resistance north of Oslo in the approaches to the Gudbrandsdal and the Osterdal. Effective Norwegian resistance was centered in two areas. In the north, the 6th Norwegian Division was near full strength guarding the border with the Soviet Union. Although the 138th Regiment was able to occupy Narvik, the Norwegians were able to hinder the German advance inland. In the south, the landing was not a success. The company of paratroopers for the Fornebu Airfield

turned back due to weather, and the air assault battalions alone had to contend with the Norwegian anti-aircraft defenses. Eventually the Germans captured the airfield, but at a high loss and at the further cost of reduced capacity of the airfield due to wreckage. Combat power did not build up as rapidly as planned through the Oslo airhead. The troops landing by sea at Oslo also suffered losses when coastal gun and torpedo batteries sunk the *Bluecher*; in addition to losing the ship and much of the crew, the Germans lost much of a battalion of infantry and divisional staff. The surface-borne assault troops were prevented from landing at Oslo until W plus 1 day.

Overall, the bold German action gained them the initiative. Despite a few miscues at Kristiansand and Oslo, the initial objectives of the campaign were met. At 1824 hours on 9 April, German Naval Group West reported that Narvik, Trondheim, Bergen, Stavanger, Kristiansand, and Arendal had been occupied, and that airborne troops were in the process of occupying Oslo, but that the Norwegian government had been evacuated. (Admiralty, 1948, p. 25) Commander, Group XXI had to deal with both the slow start at Oslo and the activities of the British fleet in the north.

The German covering force of battleships had successfully diverted the attention of the British away from Assault Group 1 and 2 and they were able to land the embarked troops. The destroyers at Narvik found that only one of the tankers had made it to port; this complicated the refueling process prior to the return trip to Germany. An additional complication was the five British destroyers that had been patrolling off the northern coast of Norway and which were ordered to investigate the situation at Narvik. On 10 April they surprised five of the ten German destroyers that had been refueling in Narvik



harbor. Those five German ships were all sunk or damaged at the cost of two British ships sunk. The German ships that were ready for sea attempted to leave Narvik on the night of 11 April, but found the mouth of the fiord heavily guarded by British ships. On 13 April, a British cruiser escorted by nine destroyers entered the fiord and destroyed the remainder of the German ships at Narvik.

The battleships and part of Assault Group 2 from Trondheim began a successful trip home on 11 April, joined on 12 April by part of Assault Group 3 from Bergen. The cost to the German navy of surface ships was high: one heavy cruiser, two light cruisers, and ten destroyers sunk, as well as other ships damaged. Additionally, German submarines were not as effective as expected due to malfunctions of their torpedoes. The burden of protecting the German beachheads fell upon the air force.

Given the success of the Royal Navy in isolating the German forces at Narvik, which was not under the umbrella of protection offered by the air force, a major expedition by the Allies was sent to capture Narvik. These forces were greatly superior to the Germans, but the commanders lacked energy and failed to exploit their advantage. They eventually did capture Narvik, but they were withdrawn on 3 June due to an advancing German column from the south and due to the impact of Allied reverses in the Battle of France.

By W plus 2, days German operations were mainly centered in four locations: in the south around Oslo, in the southwest in the Bergen/Stavanger sector, on the central coast at Trondheim, and in the north at Narvik. Scheduled reinforcements began to arrive on time; the original

plan directed these units to advance to Trondheim and Bergen by rail. However, given the developing Norwegian resistance, Group XXI retained them in the vicinity of Oslo in order to secure a base for further operations.

During W plus 4 to 5 days, units attached to the 196th Division captured the zone to the southeast of Oslo, up to the Swedish border, and the zone to the northeast of Oslo (originally the responsibility of the 181st Division), so that forces were in position to advance to the approaches leading into the Osterdal. The 163rd Division operated along the railline to Kristiansand, along the railline to Bergen, and to the north of Oslo to secure the approaches into the Gudbrandsdal. One regiment of the 181st arrived at Oslo. It was attached to the 163rd Division on W plus 5 days to reinforce the advance into the Gudbrandsdal. Moderate resistance to the activities of both divisions was provided by the 1st and 2nd Norwegian Divisions.

The Allied reaction to the German invasion of Norway in part consisted of landings at Namsos and Andalsnes between 14 to 19 April, with the intent of recapturing Trondheim with a pincer movement. These allied troops were ill-supported by artillery and air cover, and the southern unit was diverted into the Gudbrandsdal to assist Norwegian forces. Although both of these forces were eventually defeated by the Germans, they did delay the Germans from consolidating their hold on Norway. In reaction to the threat posed by the allied landings, the OKW ordered elements of the 181st Division to be airlifted into Trondheim on W plus 6 days. The 196th Division, which according to the original plan was to relieve the 138th Regiment, was detained by fighting in the vicinity of Oslo. The elements of the 181st sent to Trondheim reinforced the 138th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division and

formed Group Trondheim. The most immediate threat to Trondheim was from the north.

On W plus 8 days, the point of main effort of both the 163rd and the 196th Divisions was to the north. The 196th was to the east advancing towards the Osterdal. The 163rd, with attached units from the 69th, 181st, and 196th Divisions, was advancing towards the Gudbrandsdal. Both divisions were meeting heavy resistance, as the Norwegians were making good use of the terrain to aid the defense.

At Stavanger on W plus 8 days, an airlift of the 214th Division began. It replaced the units of the 69th Division that were then airlifted into Bergen. As the 214th Division gained strength, it began offensive operations to secure the southwest coast of Norway, where it faced light opposition. By W plus 12 days, it had opened communications overland from Oslo.

The advance to the north by the 163rd and 196th Divisions continued. On W plus 12 days, the 163rd was ordered to shift its point of main effort to the west. This was to protect the flank of the 196th as it continued north from threats of a landing by the Allies on the coast between Bergen and Andalsnes. The 163rd detached the regiment from the 181st Division, which was then attached to the 196th Division. The 196th took command of the advancing columns in both the Gudbrandsdal and the Osterdal.

On W plus 14 days, the 163rd began its attack to the west in two columns. One was along the Oslo-Bergaen railline, and the other was to the northwest toward the coast. The advance of the 163rd Division towards Bergen became stalled near the town of Bagn by fortifications and a demolished tunnel. A series of attacks by dive bombers allowed the Germans to break through; they

met advance elements of the 69th Division in the vicinity of Myrdal on W plus 23 days. The conquest of South Norway was complete.

On W plus 15 days, the column of the 196th Division advancing into the Gudbrandsdal defeated a large force of British and Norwegian defenders which were forced to retreat. The commander of the 196th believed that the column in the Osterdal was strong enough to continue the advance alone to Trondheim. He directed the column operating in the Gudbrandsdal to detach the regiment from the 181st so it would continue to Trondheim, as the 181st was now centered there. The remainder of that force was to pursue the British force retreating westward back to its beachhead at Andalsnes. The British were able to out-distance the Germans, and evacuated before advanced elements of the German forces reached Andalsnes on W plus 23 days.

In Central Norway, Group Trondheim had stopped the advance of the Allied troops that landed at Namsos on W plus 15 days at the town of Steinkjer. Some activity by Group Trondheim was begun on W plus 16 days to the south so that communications could be opened with Oslo. The forces attacking to the south met advance elements of the 196th division on W plus 21 days at Berkaak. In the north, Group Trondheim continued to pressure the allied forces, and reached Namsos on W plus 25 days, after the allies had evacuated.

To continue the momentum of the advance to the north toward Narvik, units of the 2nd Mountain Division were attached to Group XXI and airlifted to Trondheim from Germany. Overland communication to Narvik were nonexistent, the route was broken by high mountains and fiords. The 2nd Mountain Division began the advance on W plus 26 days, reaching Mosjoen



on W plus 32 days. The British attempted to slow the advance by landing small forces along the route of advance, but were generally unsuccessful. By W plus 54 days, the 2nd Mountain Division had reached Sorfad. A hand-picked unit was assembled from the division to make the final push through the mountains into Narvik. This effort proved unnecessary, as the allies had withdrawn their forces on W plus 60 days, and the 139th Regiment immediately reoccupied the town. The 138th Regiment of the 3rd Mountain Division was transported by ship into Narvik to relieve the 139th Regiment.

## F. ANALYSIS

Fall Weseruebung worked because the Germans appreciated the importance of surprise and daring in a military operation against unfavorable odds. Additionally, the Germans overcame the limitations of their forces through the innovative employment of joint forces in a maritime theater. For example, they were the first to combine aircraft and infantry in paratroop and air assault operations, they made extensive use of aircraft for both combat support and logistic support, and they used the speed advantage of surface combatant ships to move assault elements through an area of the ocean under the strategic control of the enemy. The following analysis will show the influence of German joint service organization and considerations of the theater of operations on the operation plan and conduct of the campaign.

The German armed forces were unified under OKW command in principle, but not in practice. The OKW was intended to provide unified administrative and strategic guidance at its inception, but the high command was subsequently weakened by the organizational changes of 1938 and by the

inter-service rivalry in the defense ministry of the government over allocation of resources.

Despite this situation, the German Norwegian campaign was a successful joint service operation. The cause was not due to an explicit joint doctrine able to provide procedures for joint planning and operations. However, it may be found in the traditional dominance of the army and the German General Staff among the armed forces, which may have indirectly contributed to the ability to conduct a joint operation and precluded any inter-service debate about joint doctrine. If the both navy and air force not only subordinated its operations to the army, but also modeled its planning and operational procedures on the General Staff, then the result would create an automatic condition of inter-service coordination.

Another source of German joint service competence may have been the professionalism that existed among the officer corps. The mid-level officers responsible for the planning and conduct of the campaign may have had an operational perspective which led to cooperation in order to achieve a higher objective, rather than to the promotion of their own interests.

The German leadership at the strategic level were unhindered by many of the domestic political conflicts which existed in Britain in 1915. They were able to use the maritime theater as a tool to allocate forces and organize operations to match strategic ends and means. As a result, the plan was based on a consideration of the requirements of the campaign to meet an objective, and eliminated many of the uncertainties which plagued the British theater commanders in the Turkish campaign of 1915.

The German plan was successful in overcoming two problems: the requirement to avoid a prolonged campaign and the inability to move a sufficient number of ground forces into a maritime theater. The first requirement was exacerbated by the location of Narvik in the far north of Norway; Narvik had to be occupied to secure the transportation facilities for iron ore. One approach would have been a series of limited sequential operations beginning in the south and proceeding along the coast; however, this would have presented the enemy with the opportunity to reinforce North Norway and prolong the campaign. The solution was a concentric assault at key points throughout the country, followed by a rapid reinforcement of each bridgehead. During the last phases of the planned campaign, the bridgeheads would be consolidated by forces moving into Norway from the south and into the interior.

Movement of the forces into the theater presented another problem. It was the use of both sea and air transport which provided sufficient capacity for the required forces. The portion of this movement over the water might have been interdicted by the Royal Navy, but a combination of surprise and deception, and the use of fast combatant ships rather than slower transports, gave the Germans sufficient sea "control" to move the assault force. The German ability to organize both their forces and the operation to exploit the capabilities of joint forces was a major reason for the success of the campaign.

This campaign was a demonstration of how detailed planning can interrelate with flexible execution to achieve the objectives of the campaign. The Germans used their operational plans as a tool to integrate the actions of combat forces and support forces within the theater and to communicate the

intent of the operation. Once combat began, the plans served as a basis for change, allowing the forces engaged to respond to both opportunities and crises. When enemy resistance prevented the situation from developing as expected, Group XXI made changes in the planned scheme of maneuver. Although major units were diverted from their intended operations areas, confusion was minimal and logistics support was made available. This impressive flexibility allowed the Germans to maintain the initiative throughout the campaign.

The daring and surprise, which secured the initiative in the theater for the Germans, was the key element of this campaign and it was the reason for the success of the Norwegian campaign. The desire to achieve the same result, securing the initiative in the theater, led to a similarly bold campaign conducted by the United States during the Korean War.



#### IV. THE U.S. CAMPAIGN IN KOREA (INCHON), 1950

In the strategic literature of the Cold War, the Korean War stands as a prime example of the challenges of combat in "limited war." The limits of war, however, depend on a nation's strategic calculus and national interests at stake. Within this context, the Inchon landing and United Nations offensive in the Fall of 1950 holds an uncertain position for analysis. One could be dismiss the episode as a futile waste, just as the war could be dismissed as an aberration. The Korean War could also be studied, within the context of a limited war, to gain an appreciation of political and military decision-making. If one sees violence as a normal, though unfortunate, part of political intercourse between nations, then wars which limit the ends or means of violence deserve as close a scrutiny as wars involving intercontinental nuclear weapons.

From the perspective of the United States, the intervention in Korea turned a regional war between North Korean and South Korea into a limited war. The war was fought to gain a number of limited objectives, which included the survival of South Korea, the deterrence of the Soviet Union, and the enhancement of the credibility of European allies. The larger global interests of both the United States and the Soviet Union prevented the war from approaching war's inherent full extremes of violence, or absolute war. Within the limits established on the scope of violence, the Inchon landing took place within the framework of an operational military doctrine for amphibious warfare, the development of which had been initiated in the 1930s and perfected in the 1940s. General Douglas MacArthur, depending

upon the technical expertise of veterans of the Second World War and the institutional memory of the United States armed forces, conducted an operation which reversed the fortunes of war for the North Korean aggressors. To achieve this success, MacArthur depended on control of the sea and air, which led to his eventual success on land, within a maritime theater.

Further offensive military action into North Korean territory led to failure two months later when the Chinese intervened. This chapter focuses on the successful aspects of U.S. and U.N. actions in Korea in 1950, but the unsuccessful aspects exist as a reminder of the requirement for a nation to maintain the delicate balance in strategic calculations. The problems experienced by the United States, in both a military and a political sense, are manifestations of the attempt to come to grips with its first experience with limited war as a "super power." The political and military leadership of the United States had experienced the unconditional victory over the Axis powers in the Second World War, to define the requirements for a conditional victory was unusual. The volatile situation was first created by the North Korean invasion, and then maintained in the aftermath of the Inchon landing and pursuit to the north across the 38th parallel; this led to the intervention by the Chinese communist forces, causing the war to settle into a military and political stalemate near the pre-war border. The eventual result of the Korean War overshadows the operational brilliance of the Inchon campaign.

## A. U.S. JOINT SERVICE ORGANIZATION

One aspect of the Inchon campaign was the successful blending of ground, naval, and air forces into a coherent whole. This occurred within the context of the development of the U.S. joint service organization. For much of its history, the United States was insulated from the international system, yet able to pursue an expansionist policy on the North American continent. The effect of this unique heritage on the nation's armed forces resulted in neither the army nor the navy being a traditionally dominant service. Both the army and the navy served the nation selectively and discretely, and not in the manner traditionally associated with the development of the armed forces on the European continent. Despite the usual separation of the administration and operation of the two services, the services had managed to cooperate when required. In the Mexican-American War, the landings at Vera Cruz in 1847 led directly to the conclusion of that war. In the American Civil War, Federal forces conducted riverine operations in the western theater and amphibious operations in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean which led to the isolation and eventual surrender of the Confederate States. A characteristic of these examples of inter-service cooperation were that, although the framework was often established from a centralized location, the detailed control was left to commanders at the local level.

During the Spanish-American War, inter-service coordination was highly unsatisfactory. In 1903, after an analysis of operations, the Secretary of War Elihu Root and the Secretary of the Navy John D. Long resolved to rectify the problem. (Caraley, 1966, p. 6) Their solution was the same as the solution being pursued by the leading military nations of the world at that

time: reorganize along the lines of the Prussian/German General Staff. (Kennedy, 1985, p. 3) The reformers assumed that better joint administration would lead to better joint operations.

At this point a distinction should be made between military operations and military administration. Effective operations depend on the combat capabilities of the armed forces; administration involves the formation, maintenance, and training of the armed forces. These two functions are interrelated, but might not necessarily require the same organization to accomplish them. A further general point concerns two models guiding the organization of forces for joint operations. "Mutual cooperation", which was the accepted doctrinal practice in the U.S. armed forces until 1942, requires that the units of each service remain under the command of the senior officer of that service in the theater; joint actions depend upon agreement and cooperation between the senior army and navy officer in the theater. "Unified command" assigns one officer, from any service and advised by a joint staff, general control of all forces in a theater; the unified commander is responsible for directing all operations in that theater.

The reformers under Root were not able to implement all of their intended reforms. One reform in particular was the Joint Army and Navy Board, formed in 1903, to consider ". . . all matters requiring the cooperation of the two Services in an effort to reach agreement on a program acceptable to both." (Morton, 1957, p. 37) The membership of the Joint Board consisted of eight, individually selected senior officers. The Joint Board functioned successfully for a period of time, in part developing war plans. However, if serious disagreement existed among its members, it was unable to make and



enforce unpopular decisions. By the time of the First World War, the Joint Board had lost favor with the President Woodrow Wilson, and met only twice during that conflict.

In 1919, the Army recommended that the Joint Board be reinstituted and reorganized, to include membership dependant upon billet and a subordinate committee to conduct detailed war planning. Nonetheless, the Joint Board was a deliberative body to coordinate Army and Navy policy, and not a command body to provide joint strategic direction of military operations. (Caraley, 1966, p. 15) As U.S. involvement in World War Two approached and collaboration with the British was arranged through high-level conferences between the political and military leadership of each nation, an informal organization comprised of the Army Chief of Staff, the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, the Chief of Naval Operations, and presided over by the Chief of Staff to the President, was created to parallel the British Chiefs of Staff. (Caraley, 1966, p. 16) This body which became known as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was never formally authorized in writing. (Caraley, 1966, p. 17)

After the war, the continuing status of the Joint Chiefs of Staff came into question along with the future organization of the armed forces of the United States. Many believed that the JCS organization had been an important contribution, managing the U.S. role in the Allied victory. (Korb, 1976, p. 15) The National Security Act of 1947 legitimized the role of the JCS in the United States military establishment. Seven specific duties were assigned to the JCS through this legislation. The Joint Chiefs were to prepare strategic plans, prepare logistic plans, establish unified commands in strategic areas of

national interest, formulate joint training policies, formulate military education policies, review personnel and logistic requirements submitted by the services, and provide representatives to the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations. (Historical Division, 1979, pp. 32-33)

Another development from World War Two that had an effect on the post-war organization of the armed forces, in combination with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was the establishment of vast theaters of operations. In the Spring of 1942 the British and American leaders divided the world into three geographical areas with assigned responsibilities of command where Allied forces were operating: the Pacific Area under American command, the Indian Ocean and Middle East Area under British command, and the Atlantic and European Area under shared command. (Caraley, 1966, pp. 17-18) After the war, the United States used this concept of operational theater command, developed as a requirement of coalition warfare, and applied it to peacetime requirements for national security.

The first Unified Command Plan, prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was approved by the President on 14 December 1946 and consisted of seven joint commands and two single-service commands. Eight of these commands were based on geography and included the Far East Command, composed of the Japanese Islands, Ryukyu Islands, the Philippines, the Marianas Islands, and the Bonin Islands; the Pacific Command; the Alaskan Command; the European Command; the Atlantic Command; the Caribbean Command; the Northeast Command, composed of Greenland and Iceland; and the U.S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Command.

The Strategic Air Command was the only functional command included in the initial plan. (Committee, 1985, p. 279)

A final development, which was a carryover from the wartime practices of the U.S. joint command structure, was the means of control that the centralized national military command structure used to control the decentralized operational theater forces. A member of the JCS was designated as the "executive agent" for each command. (Historical Division, 1979, p. 37) The executive agent was the head of the service of which the theater commander was a member, and wrote the operational directives on which the theater commander was to base his plans. For example, General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff for the Army, was the executive agent for the European theater.

This practice continued under the post-war unified command structure. Therefore, a link was established between the joint administrative organization and joint operational organization of the U.S. armed forces.

## **B. THEATER OF OPERATIONS**

From the perspective of the United States in 1950, Korea was a secondary, and maritime, theater of operations in relation to the main theater of operations of Western Europe. The following analysis will show some of the interrelationships between these two theaters, within the larger context of the U.S. national security problem. The period from 1945 to 1950 is rich in complexity, and can be analyzed from many different organizational, technological, and ideological viewpoints; the process here will not cover in depth many of the major antecedents to the Korean War. The following section reviews the U.S. perception of threats to its national security, the

major political and military policies it considered in deterring and countering those threats, and the available military force to commit to the Korean theater, all of which is essential to understand the Korean campaign in the context of a primary/secondary theater relationship.

### **1. Threats to U.S. National Security**

United States policy tended to diverge from its apparent unity at the conclusion of the Second World War. On one hand, there was a desire to return to normalcy, putting the experiences of the depression of the 1930s and the war behind the country and to look forward to a better future. As a result, the government sought to rapidly demobilize the armed forces and to reduce federal spending in order to free the resources required to build a peacetime society and economy. On the other hand, there was a realization that the end of the war did not bring an end to conflict, and that the long term interests of the United States required that it assume a dominant role in world affairs. Problems within the international system included the future status of Germany and Japan, the expansion of totalitarian communism, and pressure to decolonize Asia and Africa. From the start of the period, finding a match between desired ends and available means was elusive.

In terms of immediate national security interests, the relationship with the Soviet Union was the most important. There was always an element of distrust between the Soviet Union and the United States during World War Two, despite their status as allies. In the immediate post-war era, both nations groped for a means of restructuring the world. In the closing days of the war, there was an attempt at accommodation. After a series of fruitless negotiations with the Soviets over the status of Eastern Europe, a



turning point came within the government. As the Soviets came to be seen as a threat, the policy of the United States towards the Soviet Union moved from accommodation to containment.

Containment of the Soviet expansion of influence as a policy grew out of the perception that Soviet post-war goals were widely divergent from those of the United States. The original concept of containment was first expressed by George Kennan in 1947 when he was serving as counsel to the embassy in Moscow. At the time, the political leadership in Washington, D.C. was receiving mixed signals from the Soviet government concerning their intentions. In a diplomatic cable, Kennan articulated the "sources of Soviet conduct."

Briefly stated, Kennan's message portrayed the Soviet leadership viewing the world as hostile, and they themselves were insecure in their positions. The Soviets were using the ideology of communism to cloak their authoritarian rule within the Soviet Union to control their population; to gain greater security, they sought to extend the power of the Soviet Union geographically and politically by any means at their disposal, though not necessarily in a dramatic move. (Gaddis, 1982, pp. 33-36) To the U.S. military, tempered by four years of war, the Soviet Union fit the profile of how an enemy should look: an expansionist dictatorship. (Sherry, 1977, p. 215)

This containment policy did not necessarily require a military component. Containment emphasized psychological, social, and economic forces in which the United States and the Western democracies held an advantage. By strengthening its own societies, the West would prevail, in time, over the authoritarian regime of the Soviet Union. The response by the

United States should be to strengthen the domestic and social institutions of the nation, and extend assistance to friendly powers.

At the end of World War Two, seemingly U.S. interests were evenly divided between Western Europe and the Far East. The inability of the U.S. to affect the outcome of the Chinese Civil War resulted in a drastic reduction of the interest of the U.S. in Asia. The nation came to view the Philippines and Japan as bulwarks against unfavorable developments on the Asian mainland.

By 1949, the perception in the United States of the threat from totalitarian communism deepened due to the alliance between Stalin and Mao, and the detonation of a Soviet atomic bomb. The spectre of universal communism led by the Soviets who were determined to expand their influence caused the United States to reassess the threat to its interests. The participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty organization in 1949, forming an alliance with the nations of Western Europe, allowed the nation to take action to protect the national interest that was most threatened by the Soviets.

## **2. Political-Military Considerations**

The development of a strategy to protect U.S. interests from the perceived threat of the Soviet Union was an evolutionary process. As the war ended, a debate ensued over the future size of the armed forces. Political leaders were still formulating a national strategy for the post-war period at the same time that they were responding to domestic demands for demobilization. A major consideration was how best to deter an enemy from attacking the U.S. or its allies. Another consideration in this process of

formulating a strategy was a proposal to adopt Universal Military Training (UMT).

General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the Army, was a major proponent of UMT. From his perspective, the two major wars of the Twentieth Century which involved the United States were won on the ability of the nation to bring overwhelming force to bear on the enemy. Additionally, these wars were not prevented because the United States did not appear ready to enter the war. Thus, the United States was forced to rely on the strength of other nations to keep the enemy at bay until the latent strength of the U.S. could be mobilized. Proponents of UMT observed that there were no longer any potential allied nations strong enough to carry the fight for the U.S. until ready, and that modern weapons could strike the nation, and prevent it from mobilizing. Thus, UMT and a ready industrial infrastructure would be required to deter a foreign power from attacking the nation at the onset. (Sherry, 1977, pp. 200-201)

The Congress was not swayed by this argument, and neither were other military leaders, who preferred to keep a sizeable professional force ready to strike quickly to enforce U.S. policy and thereby work to deter war. In an era of economy, neither side won. Drastic cost-cutting gutted the ability to provide for an adequate professional standing military, and although legislation to extend the draft was approved, UMT was not enacted.

Military planning concentrated solely on general war as the only contingency. In addition to this, weapons technology, in the form of long range bombers and atomic weapons, had added another dimension to military operations. Prior to this development, military forces were allocated

to different geographic theaters to execute a national grand strategy to fight the enemy and accomplish political objectives. Utilizing the new military dimension, planes armed with atomic bombs could be dispatched from one geographical theater into another, to bomb the sources of the enemy's strength; a reversion to the Air Power theories of the 1930s.

For a period of time, some were convinced that the new weapons-technology dimension had made the geographic paradigm irrelevant. Partly by default and partly by design, the role of "defense" was left to the ability of the Air Force to deliver the atomic bomb to deter or to bomb an enemy to force surrender. The defense establishment became enamored with the atomic weapon; it was thought to make obsolete ground and naval forces. Based on a short-term, narrow calculation of costs, it was considered much cheaper than ground and air forces. This new dimension required a degree of political and moral risk that its proponents chose to ignore. The Korean War partially reestablished the geographic paradigm, and its use as a complement to a national security posture which seeks to shape the international system and confront it when necessary.

The relationship between Europe and Asia was reflected in the war plan approved in December of 1949 by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The JCS expected a Soviet attack from the East Europe into the West Europe. In response, the U.S. would attempt to maintain a bridgehead on the continent, or failing that, attempt to reestablish a presence as soon as possible. In the Pacific, the United States would assume a strategic and tactical defensive. Refusing any military operations on the Asian mainland, the Philippines,



Japan, and Okinawa would be defended, and Taiwan would be denied the enemy. (Schnabel and Watson, 1979, p. 47)

The President came to see the deterrent posture of the United States as being compromised by an over-reliance on the atomic bomb and the weakness of general purpose forces, given the increasing threat from the Soviet Union. He requested a study from a group headed by Paul Nitze to evaluate the security problems of the nation. The result was the document called NSC-68, which built upon the concept of containment, but due to the increased perception of Communist military and political strength, it seemed to emphasize the military component rather than other aspects of that policy. NSC-68 called for an expansion of the armed forces of the United States of both general purpose and nuclear forces. This document was ready in April 1950, but the proposed policy of spending money on the military during a period of fiscal austerity was controversial. The invasion of South Korea by North Korea on 25 June 1950 seemed to force the issue; a larger military establishment would be required to meet the perceived threat posed by the Soviets and world communism.

President Truman viewed the attack on South Korea by the North Koreans as the preliminary to an attack on Europe by the Soviets. The President believed that the inaction of the Western Democracies in the 1930s when Japan invaded Manchuria and Germany expanded its borders in Europe was a cause of the Second World War. Guided by the strategy of containment, as implemented by NSC-68, the United States committed its forces in South Korea, with the approval of the Security Council of the United Nations.

The connection of this action in Korea to the main theater consists of two separate aspects with the opposite effect. First, the primary international interest of the United States that was threatened by the Soviets was Europe. The United States sought to protect this interest through the formation of an alliance. For that alliance to be able to confront the Soviet Union, it had to be both politically united and militarily strong. Through its action in Korea, the United States hoped to prove to its European allies and to the Soviet Union that it had the will to act decisively; simply stated, it acted to build credibility to strengthen the alliance and to deter the Soviet Union. Second, at the same time that the U.S. was attempting to appear credible through strengthening the military power of the alliance, it was diverting its limited assets to fight in Korea. NSC-68 was not yet in effect; the expansion of the armed forces for which it provided had not begun. There was a period of severe shortfalls in the forces available to meet commitments in both Europe and Korea.

### 3. Military Considerations

In the summer of 1950, the Army was composed of ten undermanned divisions, the Marine Corps consisted of two undermanned divisions, the Air Force consisted of 48 wings, and the Navy consisted of 671 ships. (Weigley, 1973, p. 368) One factor which made intervention feasible were the units that were in close geographical proximity to Korea stationed in the Far East Command and Pacific. The Far East Command was one of eight unified commands in the U.S. command structure to which units were assigned when forward deployed. This command was responsible for the defense of Japan, Okinawa, the Marianas Islands, and the Philippines. (Field, 1962, p. 44) The Joint Chiefs of Staff increased this geographical area of responsibility to

include Korea on 25 June 1950. General MacArthur, Commander in Chief, Far East Command (CINCFE) was also authorized to send military equipment authorized by U.S. military advisors in the Republic of Korea; to employ Air Force and Navy forces to establish a safe zone in the vicinity of Seoul to aid evacuation of U.S. nationals; and to prepare to employ forces of the Far East Command and the Seventh Fleet in direct action in support of South Korea, below the 38th parallel, if authorized by the U.N. Security Council. (Schnabel and Watson, 1979, pp. 72-73) On 30 June 1950, the JCS gave CINCFE authority to commit Army forces in Korea.

Given its status as a unified command, Far East Command should have had three subordinate component commands from each service; however, MacArthur chose to keep the Army forces directly subordinate to his General Headquarters, without an intermediate component commander. A Joint Strategic Plans and Operations Group was established on 20 August 1949; it was composed of representatives of each service and was supervised by General Wright, G-3 of the Far East Command. It served throughout the war as the principal planning agency for the U.N. Command. (Appleman, 1961, p. 51)

The Eighth Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, controlled the ground forces assigned to the Far East Command. Its mission included participation in the occupation of Japan; because of the administrative nature of this responsibility and of the lack of suitable training areas in Japan, these divisions were not fully trained and ready for combat operations. Additionally, each division was manned at seventy percent of wartime strength. The units assigned to the Eighth Army were the 7th, 24th,

and 25th Infantry Divisions, and the 1st Cavalry Division. (Appleman, 1961, pp. 49-50)

Vice Admiral Charles Turner Joy was Commander Naval Forces Far East. Navy. Subordinate units included TF 90, Amphibious Force Far East, and TF 96, U.S. Naval Forces Japan. TF 90, under the command of Rear Admiral James H. Doyle, consisted of the five ships of Amphibious Group One. This unit was not normally assigned to the Far East Command, but was deployed to the area to conduct training with the army forces in Japan. TF 96 consisted of one light cruiser, four destroyers, one submarine, one British patrol craft, and six minesweepers. (Field, 1962, pp. 45-46)

The forward deployed ships of the Pacific Fleet were assigned to the Seventh Fleet, under the command of Vice Admiral Arthur D. Struble. Seventh Fleet was under the operational command of the Pacific Command; when operating in support of the Far East Command, it came under the operational control of Commander Naval Forces Far East. Seventh Fleet consisted of one carrier task group, designated TF 77, and comprised of one aircraft carrier, a cruiser in support, and a screening group of eight destroyers; a logistics support group; four submarines; and a patrol aircraft wing. The primary logistics base for the Seventh Fleet was Subic Bay in the Philippines. (Field, 1962, 47-48)

Support for South Korea was also provided by British Commonwealth forces beginning on 29 June 1950. Initially, a British light carrier and escorts were available; Australian, Canadian, and New Zealander ships were also pledged to join the United Nations forces. (Field, 1962, p. 55)



Far East Air Forces (FEAF) were under the command of Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer; under his command were the largest concentration of USAF strength outside of the continental United States. FEAF consisted of Fifth Air Force based in Japan, Thirteenth Air Force based in the Philippines, and Twentieth Air Force based on Okinawa. Assets immediately available within range of Korea included four squadrons of fighter planes, a light bomb wing, and a troop carrier wing. (Appleman, 1961, p. 50)

### C. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The terrain of Korea presents a challenge to a commander considering offensive operations. The Korean peninsula is bordered on the east by the Sea of Japan, on the south by the Korean Strait, and on the west by the Yellow Sea. Most of the northern border connecting it with the Manchuria on the Asian mainland is formed by two rivers, the Yalu flowing west into the Yellow Sea and the Tamar flowing east into the Sea of Japan. In the east, high mountains rise from the coastal area; there are few natural harbors and the tide does not vary drastically. The south and the east coast has an indented coastline and a large tidal range. The terrain in the west is rugged, but not as mountainous as the eastern portion of the country. (Appleman, 1960, pp. 1-2)

The terrain channeled the North Korean invasion across the 38th parallel into a minor attack in the east between the sea and the coastal mountain range, another moderate-sized attack in the center of the peninsula, and the greatest weight of the attack on Seoul in the west. Seoul was a crucial communications center; its capture on 28 June compromised the ROK defense. The piecemeal introduction of U.S. troops of the 24th Infantry

Division beginning on 1 July, added to the air support provided by Air Force and Navy aircraft, slowed but did not stop the North Koreans. Sustained combat eventually weakened the units of the North Korean Peoples' Army (NKPA), and substantial reinforcement allowed a defensive perimeter to be established within 30 miles of Pusan by early August.

### **1. Concept for an Amphibious Landing**

Even as the U.N. forces sought to slow the NKPA offensive, General MacArthur explored options to gain the initiative and defeat the North Koreans. By mid-July he envisioned a campaign composed of three phases: Phase I, halt the NKPA advance; Phase II, reinforce the UN forces in the Pusan perimeter to permit offensive action; and Phase III, an amphibious counterstroke, in conjunction with a breakout from the perimeter. The assumptions of this campaign plan were: (1) the NKPA ground advance would be stopped and reinforcements for U.N. forces would be available, (2) the build-up would be sufficient to allow for U.N. offensive operations in the vicinity of Pusan, (3) U.N. forces would retain air and naval superiority in the theater, (4) North Korea would not be reinforced by either the Soviet Union or People's Republic of China, and (5) the center of gravity of the NKPA would remain in the south and that the Inchon sector would not be reinforced. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, p. 57)

The selection of a landing site created some controversy. The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to the concept of a landing behind enemy lines, if the tactical situation was favorable to the maneuver. The JCS did not agree to a specific landing site. General MacArthur desired to land at Inchon, which was a communications center for which the NKPA logistics support flowed

for its forces in the south. He considered the amphibious landing the most powerful military device available to him; he wanted to sever the the North Korean supply lines and destroy the NKPA. (Appleman, 1961, p. 493) MacArthur planned to strike in mid-September. This maneuver entailed a great deal of risk due to the numerous disadvantages to landing at Inchon, which was expressed by Navy and Marine Corps planners and by the JCS. (Appleman, 1962, pp. 492-494)

The disadvantages of conducting an amphibious assault at Inchon could be grouped into physical obstacles, military handicaps, and political hurdles. (Cagle, 1954, p. 47) There were considerable physical obstacles confronting the Navy attack force and Marine Corps landing force. Inchon was situated on the west coast of Korea and served as the sea port for Seoul, 20 miles inland. It was reached from the sea by the 45 nautical mile Flying Fish Channel, which was narrow and shallow. Tides average 29 feet in Inchon harbor; the next sequence of high tides able to accommodate amphibious landing ships would occur on 15 September and last for four days, not to occur again until October.

The island of Wolmi-do separates the outer harbor from the inner harbor, dominating the approaches to the city. It was connected to the mainland by a causeway that was a half-mile long. The North Koreans had fortified the island, so that a preliminary landing would have to be made to capture it before the main landings could occur. There were no suitable beaches on which to land the main assault force. The main assault would have to be made onto a sea wall adjacent to the center of the city. Attacking

into an urban area from the sea was a unique task for U.S. amphibious forces. (Cagle, 1954, pp. 47-48)

The military handicaps of landing at Inchon included assembling a force large enough to conduct the operation; finding sufficient lift to transport the force to Inchon; and an inadequate amount of time to both plan the embarkation, assault, and follow-on operations and conduct a rehearsal. MacArthur had requested a Marine division in July. Most active-duty combat forces from the west coast, a regimental combat team of the 1st Marine Division, had been sent to Korea and were fighting in the perimeter as the First Provisional Marine Brigade. To find additional amphibious-trained troops, and then to find troops to replace them in the perimeter, would be a challenge. Through a call-up of reserves, and by taking cadres from the 2nd Marine Division on the east coast, one additional regiment was formed. A third regiment was to be formed from additional reserves and from a battalion that was currently deployed in the Mediterranean. To replace the regiment in the perimeter, a regiment from the 7th Infantry Division would act as a floating reserve, embarked onboard its transports, until the effects of the amphibious landing had reduced enemy pressure on the Pusan perimeter. (Appleman, 1961, p. 496-497)

The expeditionary force was to be called X Corps, under the command of Major General Edward M. Almond. It was to be comprised of the 1st Marine Division and the 7th Infantry Division. Bringing the 7th Infantry Division up to a wartime complement was also difficult. It had been used to fill up shortfalls in the units sent to Korea. To fill its ranks, the division was reinforced with South Korean recruits and with all replacements arriving



into the theater from the United States from 23 August to 3 September. (Appleman, 1961, pp. 491-492) MacArthur had also requested paratroop units for the operation. The 187th RCT had been sent, but with the provision that it not be used in a combat jump until 29 September because it was undertrained. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, p. 172) They were to serve as X Corps reserve during the Inchon operation. (Appleman, 1961, p. 503n.) A unit of ROK Marines also served as part of X Corps reserve, and was not to participate in the initial assault.

The ships which transferred the Marines from the continental United States to Japan, in addition to those already in the theater, were to serve as the nucleus of the Amphibious Task Force (ATF). Additional ships were chartered merchants, and some were recommissioned vessels from the Shipping Control Administration Japan (SCAJAP).

Operation Chromite was planned in 23 days. By the standards of the Second World War, the time available to plan Operation Chromite was severely truncated. Given a period of less than a month, plans had to be made to gather, organize, and land over 70,000 men, equipment, and supplies of X Corps through Inchon.

Political problems involved trying to ascertain the reaction of China and the Soviet Union to the Inchon landing. Since Operation Chromite had the potential to drastically alter the course of the war through decisive military action, it might prod the larger communist powers to enter the war.

Although the Navy and Marine amphibious planners recommended other landing sites, MacArthur insisted that the landing take place at Inchon. In a meeting on 23 July in Tokyo, he outlined his plan to representatives

from the JCS, and they tentatively approved his plan on 28 August. MacArthur issued his operations order for Operation Chromite on 30 August. The NKPA had begun a final offensive with the remainder of their strength on the lines of the Pusan perimeter in early September. This caused the Joint Chiefs some concern, and twice on 5 September and 7 September they requested that MacArthur reconsider his plans for a counter-offensive. (Appleman, 1961, pp. 494-495) MacArthur was undeterred; he responded to the JCS that his plans remained unchanged and that although he was aware of the risk, he was certain that the perimeter at Pusan would hold and that the Inchon landing would have the desired effect of "wresting the initiative from the enemy and thereby presenting an opportunity for a decisive blow." (Schnabel and Watson, 1979, p. 213) The JCS sent their final approval of the plan on 8 September. (Schnabel and Watson, 1979, p. 214) The success of the Korean campaign depended on the ability of the 1st Marine Division to attack from the sea.

## **2. U.S. Amphibious Warfare Doctrine**

A number of factors came together during the interwar period of 1919-1940 which led to the development of U.S. amphibious warfare doctrine. Among the first of the factors was the search by the United States Marine Corps for a new institutional mission. The Marines were in a difficult position: in the First World War, they had served with distinction, integrated into Army divisions deployed in France; after the war they had reverted to their role as an international police force in China and Latin America. Permanent absorption into the Army was not palatable, and the role of enforcer for the President of the United States was losing its respectability in

the changing international political climate after 1933. Visionary members of the Corps thought that an expansion of one of the assigned missions, defending advanced naval bases, could be parlayed into an offensive mission of acquiring advanced naval bases within the context of a naval campaign. (Rosen, 1988, pp. 160-161)

This merged with the second factor: the theory of sea power espoused by Admiral Mahan and a major tenet of U.S. Navy doctrine. Naval strategists and war planners concentrated almost exclusively on a future Pacific Ocean war, both before the First World War, and then during the interwar period. The protection of the Philippines from the rising power of Japanese imperialism provided the context. The greatest constraint on American naval operations was the distance between the United States and the Western Pacific Ocean, which more thoughtful planners recognized would hinder logistic support for fleet operations. That the isolated islands of the Central Pacific Ocean would serve as support for fleet operations seemed the obvious solution. That many of these islands might be garrisoned by Japanese troops was to provide the motivation to develop an amphibious assault doctrine and techniques for implementing that doctrine.

The concept was slow to gain favor in any of the services; critics pointed to the failure at Gallipoli as proof that hostile shores could not be assaulted. However, by 1933 the Joint Army and Navy Board had considered a doctrine which provided a framework for joint overseas expeditions. This was published in a pamphlet that suggested a method of preparing plans for such an operation, provided a number of definitions and solutions for the technical problems of amphibious assault, and, primarily, stated many of the

problems expected to be encountered in such an operation. (Isely and Crowl, 1951, p. 35)

The staff and students at Marine Corps Schools in Quantico, Virginia expanded this pamphlet into a larger publication entitled the Tentative Manual for Landing Operations, which was completed by 1934. The manual divided landing operations into five sequential phases: Planning, Embarkation, Rehearsal, Movement (to the objective area), and Assault. In the assault phase, success is dependent upon the interaction of six component parts: command relations, naval gunfire support, aerial support, ship-to-shore movement, securing the beachhead, and logistics. (Isely and Crowl, 1951, p. 37) The concept of an amphibious assault was merely a direct attack in the style of the First World War upon a prepared enemy position, with naval gunfire replacing massed artillery fires and troops transported to the critical point of attack by small boats rather than by marching. The margin of error for a direct attack against prepared enemy positions is low, and chances of success are made lower when the attack is being made from the tactical deployment of transport shipping. The above six components must mesh as nearly perfectly as possible if the attacker is to gain a foothold on the enemy shore to then build up combat power effectively, allowing the attacker to shift from an amphibious battle to a land battle, leading ultimately to the accomplishment of the force's objective.

Each of the six elements was touched upon in the planning process. Command relationships in Navy-Marine operations were not generally a problem; a parallel chain of command was established between the landing force commander and the naval supporting forces commander with a



common superior, the naval attack force commander. This resulted in a mix of joint and unified command. Cooperative and parallel planning was done at lower levels, with differences resolved by a common superior.

Planning for naval gunfire and aerial support received considerable attention. New techniques had to be developed to fully exploit gun, munition, and aviation technology. In an operation, plans for the sequencing and timing of fires had to be supported by extensive communications planning in order to coordinate actions.

Ship-to-shore movement is the arrangement of the tactical movement of the assault force to the beach in the space of the objective area, and the arrangement in time of the loading of assault craft and the speed of advance to the beach, coordinated with available supporting fires and close air support. This component of the assault also required specialized techniques and equipment, especially amphibian tractors, landing craft, and transport ships such as the Landing Ship Tank and Landing Ship Dock. The deployment of those assets in an ideal location to preserve the momentum of the advance of troops across the beach upon landing had to mesh exactly with supporting fires.

These elements created a favorable tactical situation to seize the immediate landing area from its defenders. At this point, it is essential to create sufficient momentum of forces arriving ashore to carry the battle inland, away from the beach. As the beach is secured, and the combat troops gain room to maneuver, reinforcements and supplies to allow continual expansion of the beachhead must begin to come ashore. Specialized teams of the Landing Force Shore Party and Naval Beachgroup arrive just behind the

first waves of combat troops to organize the beach and to keep the flow of material and men moving across the beach.

A great deal of forethought is required to ensure that the proper units and supplies are available at the proper time. This depends ultimately on the embarkation of the transport vessels, which must match the landing force commander's landing plan and scheme of maneuver ashore. Embarkation which allows for the effective prosecution of the battle ashore usually does not result in an efficient allocation of space onboard ship. The tradeoff between the efficient utilization of the limited volume of available transport, or "administrative loading", and the effective support of combat operations, or "combat loading", is reflected in the embarkation plan.

This planning system and warfare doctrine provided the framework for essentially all of the Anglo-American landings in the global allied offensive which characterized the later stages of the Second World War. These landings could be conceptualized as three separate and distinct types of amphibious campaigns, the form of each determined by the geography, objectives, and enemy forces in the theater. In the European Theater, amphibious operations were conducted to bridge barriers of water: the Atlantic Ocean in the North African landings, the Mediterranean Sea in the Sicilian, Italian, and Southern France landings, and the English Channel in the Normandy landings.

In the Central Pacific Theater, amphibious operations were conducted to complement a naval campaign to establish sea control leading to the intended isolation of the Japanese home islands. The ocean was considered an avenue of advance rather than as a barrier. Individual positions were

captured to provide stepping stones for the next operation in the sequence. The captured islands then served as intermediate bases for forward deployed naval forces, providing locations for prompt maintenance and supply, and as air bases which supplemented logistic support, aided sea control operations, and supported the strategic bombing campaign of Japan.

In the Southwest Pacific Theater, under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, amphibious operations were conducted as an integral part of a fluid campaign integrating land, sea, and air forces in a progressive offensive campaign. The emphasis of these operations was to maintain the initiative on the ground; and the sea was a medium to complement the land. Amphibious landings avoided concentrations of the enemy; instead, they were part of a larger operation to envelope enemy forces and attack communications. It was these operations that provided the roots of Operation Chromite.

### **3. The Planning Process**

The planners for Operation Chromite, based on their personal and institutional experience acquired during World War II, utilized a systematic approach in preparation for an amphibious operation, although the process was considerably abbreviated due to the limited time available before execution of the plan. The considerations of time, space, and means required to achieve the objective were subjected to a systematic approach. An important aspect of the planning process is the establishment of parallel chains of command between ground and supporting navy units.

Limitations of time were overcome by utilizing verbal, rather than written, coordination between commands and often by inverting the

planning sequence between higher headquarters and subordinate commands. Also, some of the personnel were planning for the Inchon landing while concurrently conducting operations in the Pusan perimeter. Despite these deviations from accepted practice, the results of the planning process clearly followed from accepted doctrinal practices.

The primary temporal consideration of Operation Chromite was the date of 15 September, coinciding with hydrographic conditions providing sufficient depth for landing craft to beach close enough to the land. From this date, plans were worked backwards to coordinate the availability of forces and to organize embarkation and movement to the objective area.

Another consideration related to time was the sequence of operations, or the relative relationships of different aspects of the operation. Amphibious operations usually consist of a set sequence of actions. The first is preparation and isolation of the objective area, usually through air interdiction and deception; the second is preassault operations, consisting of reconnaissance, minesweeping, and demolition of beach obstacles; the third is the assault itself, culminating in the capture of the force beachhead line; the operations then shift into the land phase, consisting of the exploitation of the landing to capture the task force objectives. Each sequence of action is dependant upon the relative success of the preceding phase.

Considerations of space were put into the design of the Amphibious Objective Area (AOA). To landward are the beach centers, the Force Beachhead Line, target lists for naval gunfire and close air support, and various geographic objectives included in the scheme of maneuver. To seaward are the boat lanes, lines of departure, and various subareas such as



the Carrier Operating Area, Fire Support Areas, and Transport Echelon Areas. More than drawing lines on a map or chart, the organization of the AOA serves as a coordinating mechanism which reduces unnecessary communications, and saves time and effort that otherwise would be spent in minute-to-minute coordination between units.

It was essential that the Commander of the Joint Task Force control the sea, air, and land contained within the AOA to successfully complete his mission. With regards to the control of airspace, this was a departure from the practice followed in Korea, until Operation Chromite, whereby Commander Far East Air Forces had exercised centralized coordination and control of all air space. In order to adequately support the ground forces ashore and to defend the Amphibious Task Force, the Joint Task Force Commander was given control of all air space within the AOA.

The means, or military forces, assembled to execute Operation Chromite were large, though not in the continental sense. Nonetheless, an adequate mechanism to organize the forces was required in order to exercise sufficient control over them. Until the conclusion of the assault phase, all units came under the navy practice of assigning numbered task designators to each subordinate unit based on component missions within the overall plan. Each task designator is in effect for the length of time required. In this way the original plan can assign units to different commanders and different component missions, then easily transfer the unit to another commander, without requiring positive action by the commander during the operation. As dictated by the situation in the course of the campaign, the original tactical

organization, serving as a familiar basis for change, can be altered relatively easily.

#### D. THE PLAN

The date designated for D-Day was 15 September 1950. L-Hour was the time for the preliminary assault on Wolmi-do, and it was designated as 0630 hours. H-hour was the time for the main assault, and it was designated as 1730 hours. JTF 7 and the AOA became operational on D minus 5 days and was to be dissolved upon transfer of control of ground operations was transferred to the Commanding General, X Corps.

To landward, the AOA was an arc thirty miles inland from the landing site. (Appleman, 1960, p. 497) To seaward, the AOA was enclosed by a square of 100 nautical miles sides, the center of the area was located at 37-10N, 125-20E. (Field, 1962, p. 189) Within the AOA were four landing beaches. RED Beach was adjacent to the city, north of the harbor and led onto a sea wall. GREEN Beach was on the channel side of the island of Wolmi-Do. BLUE Beach was southeast of the city; the boat lane approaching this beach was over very shallow water, useable only to amphibian tractors and small landing craft, it was to be used only for the assault. YELLOW Beach was located inside the harbor and was to be used for the administrative off load of troops and supplies after the beachhead was secured.

There were three Fire Support Areas (FSAs): FSA I was farthest from the assault beaches and was to be used by cruisers with larger caliber, longer range guns; FSA II was to be used by destroyers in support of BLUE Beach; and FAS III was to be used by destroyers in support of RED Beach. (Montros and Canzona, 1955, pp. 67-69) Both the fast carrier task force and the escort carrier

task force required sea room to conduct flight operations; two area were designated; the CV OPAREA was a circle centered on 35N, 125-30E, with a diameter of 25 NM; the CVE OPAREA was a circle centered on 37-10N, 125-20E, with a diameter of 12 NM. (Field, 1962, p. 189)

In addition to planning movement within the AOA, the movement of the Amphibious Task Force (ATF) from the different embarkation ports to the AOA had to be carefully planned. Entry into the AOA by the amphibious transports carrying the assault forces had to be in the proper sequence. This was complicated by the different embarkation ports and different ship speeds within each task group of assault shipping. It was during the movement phase of the operation that different elements of each task group would join together into the proper order. In all there were six increments of transports. These different increments of the ATF were to join along the Position of Intended Movement (PIM) at various points along the track: Point IOWA (100 NM south of Cheju Do) and Point ARKANSAS (60 NM southwest of Cheju Do). Point CALIFORNIA was to be the terminus, located in the seaward approaches to Inchon, at the beginning of the Flying Fish Channel. (Montros and Canzona, 1955, pp. 80-83)

The command structure for Operation Chromite was a mission-organized joint task force structured as follows: JTF 7 was commanded by Admiral Struble. His immediate superior was Admiral Joy, Commander Naval Forces Far East. Subordinate commanders to Admiral Struble were Admiral Doyle, Attack Force commander, General Almond, Expeditionary Troops commander, Admiral Ewen, Fast Carrier Force commander, Captain Austin,

Logistics Force commander, Admiral Andrews, Covering Force commander, and Admiral Henderson, Patrol Force commander.

### **1. Scheme of Maneuver**

A "Special Planning Staff" was organized within Far East Command General Headquarters, and took over responsibility for planning Operation Chromite in August from the Joint Strategic Plans and Operations Group. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, p. 57) This special staff grew into the headquarters staff of X Corps. By 23 August they had an outline of a plan for the scheme of maneuver ashore which used the 1st Marine Division as the assault force and the 7th Infantry Division and 3rd Infantry Division as follow-on forces. It was later determined that the 3rd Infantry Division would not be combat ready in sufficient time to participate in the operation.

The important military objectives in the Inchon-Seoul corridor were to capture Kimpo Airfield intact, located 12 miles northeast of Inchon, to capture Seoul and its associated transportation network, and to link-up with elements of the Eighth Army attacking from the south toward the bridgehead. Major features of terrain in the corridor are the Han River, numerous hills, and small towns and villages. A road and a railroad connected Inchon and Seoul. Detailed intelligence concerning enemy strength and probable reaction to the landing was not available. It was estimated that only 6,500 enemy troops were stationed in the objective area, but the availability of reserves would dictate the character of the fight for Seoul. The reaction of the planners to the unknown potential strength of the enemy in the objective area was to not commit the operation to a detailed time schedule, but only to



identify six geographic phase lines to provide the framework for further planning. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, p. 58)

The ground forces of JTF 7 were organized into task groups with the following assignments: (Montross and Canzona, 1955, pp. 57-65; Appleman, 1961, pp. 497-500)

TF 92--Expeditionary Force, consisting of the X Corps, which included the 1st Marine Division, the 7th Infantry Division, and units directly attached to X Corps. The overall mission of this unit was to capture Seoul and surrounding terrain to cut the communications of the NKPA units facing the Eighth Army around the Pusan perimeter. The Xth Corps was not to take control of operations ashore until the capture of the Force Beachhead Line (FBHL) and the completion of the amphibious assault phase.

TG 92.1--Landing Force consisting of the 1st Marine Division; its maneuver elements included RCT 1, RCT 5, and RCT 7. RCT 5 (less BLT 3/5) was to assault RED Beach at H-Hour, secure the immediate area, then expand its control into the city. RCT 1 was to land at BLUE Beach at H-Hour, and advance inland to cut communications to Inchon. On D plus 1 day, both units were to join and continue to the Force Beachhead Line and continue the advance in order to exploit the landing. RCT 7 was to debark from TG 90.4 at Inchon on D plus 6 days and join the Division. The Division was to capture Kimpo Airfield, cross the Han River, secure the high ground to the north of Seoul, and capture the city. Continued operations would be to advance north and east of Seoul to assume blocking positions.

TU 92.12.3--Advance Attack Group, consisting of BLT 3/5, with an attached tank platoon, was to embark onboard shipping of TG 90.1 in Pusan

for the transit to the AOA. At L-Hour it was to assault GREEN Beach on the island of Wolmi Do. It was to secure that island and develop a position strong enough to support the main landing at H-Hour. By D plus 1 day, it was to rejoin RCT-5 and conduct further combat operations with the landing force.

TG 92.2--7th Infantry Division was to embark onboard TG 90.8 shipping in Yokohama and transit to the AOA to arrive no later than D plus 1 day. The division was to conduct an administrative landing in the port of Inchon. The first regiment debarked was to relieve elements of the 1st Marine Division in the sector south of the Inchon-Seoul road. The division was to advance on the right flank of the 1st Marine Division to seize the heights south of Seoul and the Han River, in order to support the capture of Seoul by the 1st Marine Division. Elements of the division were to then move south to Suwon to link with units of the Eighth Army advancing north from Chonan.

## **2. Supporting Forces**

The North Koreans did not have the military power to contest the control of the sea and air. Therefore, supporting forces could concentrate on providing direct combat support to the ground scheme of maneuver. A measure of indirect combat support was required to interdict the movement of NKPA reinforcements into both the objective area and the main concentration in the south. Supporting forces also played a role in transportation of ground forces and required logistics. The interaction of supporting forces and ground forces would be crucial to the success of Operation Chromite.

*a. Naval Forces*

Naval forces were not required to engage in a large amount of indirect combat support to gain sea and air control due to the weak North Korean navy and air force; therefore, indirect combat support consisted of deception and interdiction operations. Direct combat support consisted of gunfire and air bombardment of the shore. Key to the operational scheme of maneuver was the transport of the assault and follow-on ground forces, and their logistic support.

TF 90--Attack Force was to be the umbrella organization responsible for the movement to the AOA, combat operations until the landing force commander was established ashore, and combat and logistics support from the sea until Operation Chromite was complete. The command and control apparatus for the assault was to be directly attached to the task force; this included the Tactical Air Control unit, the Naval Beach Group unit, the Underwater Demolition Teams, the Boat Control units, and the Repair and Salvage units. These units were to embark onboard assault shipping of the subordinate task groups in accordance with the embarkation plan.

The following subordinate task groups were to provide transport and combat support to the ground forces of the amphibious operation (Cagle and Manson, 1957, pp. 85, 503-508; Field, 1962, 179-181):

TG 90.1--Advance Attack Group, consisting of one LSD and three APDs,. was to embark the Advance Landing Force (BLT 3/5) at Pusan. The group was to sortie on D minus 2 days, join the main body at Point Arkansas, and transit to Point California. On D-Day at 0001 hours, TG 90.1 was to

proceed up Flying Fish Channel following ships of TG 90.6, Gunfire Support Group, to meet L-Hour for the assault on GREEN Beach.

TG 90.2--Transport Group, consisting of 5 APAs, 8 AKAs, 1 AP, and 2 LSDs, was to embark, in accordance with the embarkation plan, selected elements of RCT 1 and other 1st Marine Division units at Kobe, and selected elements of RCT 5 at Pusan. Between D minus 5 days and D minus 2 days, in accordance with the sortie plan, the separate elements were to depart port and transit to the AOA. On D-Day, this group was to conform to the landing plan, as directed.

TG 90.3--Tractor Group, consisting of 47 LSTs and 1 LSM, was to embark, in accordance with the embarkation plan, selected elements of RCT 1 and other 1st Marine Division units at Kobe, and selected elements of RCT 5 at Pusan. Between D minus 5 days and D minus 2 days, in accordance with the sortie plan, the separate elements were to proceed from port and transit to the AOA. On D-Day, this group was to conform to the landing plan, as directed.

TG 90.4--Transport Division 14, consisting of 9 amphibious ships, was to embark RCT 7 at Kobe and elements of MAG 33 at Pusan. This task group was not scheduled to enter the AOA until D plus 6 days, and was to be landed administratively

TG 90.5--Air Support Group, consisting of two escort carriers (with two USMC attack squadrons embarked) and four destroyers as escorts, was to proceed from Sasebo on D minus 7 days to the CVE Oparea. This unit was to conduct pre-assault air bombardment and provide close air support to ground forces as directed.



TG 90.6--Gunfire Support Group, consisting of a Cruiser Element of two heavy cruisers and two light cruisers, a Destroyer Element of six destroyers divided into two fire support units of 3 destroyers each, and an LSMR Element of three LSMR's (Landing Ship, Medium, Rocket), was to proceed from Sasebo on D minus 5 days to the AOA. On D-minus 2 days, the task group was to commence preparatory bombardment of preplanned fires and repeat the operation if required on D-minus 1 day. Beginning on D-Day, the task group was to support the assault with on-call fires requested by ground forces ashore and with preplanned fires. The Fire Support Areas were to be assigned as follows: Cruiser Element to FSA I, Destroyer Elements to FSA II and III, LSMR Element to designated positions to support assault at H-Hour.

TG 90.7--Screening and Protective Group, consisting of two destroyers and eight patrol craft of the USN and Commonwealth navies, was to provide an escort for amphibious shipping of TF 90 along the transit route.

TG 90.8--Second Echelon Movement Group, consisting of a mix of three USN, four USNS, and twelve chartered merchant ships was to embark TG 92.2, the 7th Infantry Division, at Yokohama, and sortie on D minus 6 days for the transit to the AOA. It was to have the highest priority for off-loading, after TG 92.1 was ashore.

TG 90.9--Third Echelon Movement Group, consisting of one USN, two USNS, and thirteen chartered merchant ships, was to embark the remaining units of TF 92, consisting of troops attached directly to X Corps, at Yokohama, and sortie on D minus 4 days for the transit to the AOA. It was to be the last group of transports to be off-loaded.

TF 91--Blockade and Covering Force, consisting of 10 British Commonwealth and fifteen ROK ships, including the *HMS Triumph*, a light aircraft carrier (CVL), was to (1) operate along the west coast of Korea outside of the AOA to prevent NK forces from interdicting the movement of TF 90, (2) conduct special reconnaissance missions and other special operations, and (3) to interdict and divert NKPA forces from the objective area.

TF 99--Patrol and Reconnaissance Force, consisting of three seaplane tenders, four USN patrol squadrons and two RAF patrol squadrons, was to provide long range reconnaissance of enemy forces attempting to enter the AOA.

TF 77--Fast Carrier Force, consisting of three aircraft carriers (CVs) with three air groups embarked, and two light cruisers and fourteen destroyers as escorts, was to sortie from Sasebo and to be on station in the CV OPAREA beginning on D minus 3 days. The mission was to gain air supremacy in the AOA, interdict NKPA forces entering the objective area, and provide deep support and close air support to support the ground scheme of maneuver.

TF 79--Logistic Force, consisting of twenty USN combat auxiliaries organized into four subordinate functional groupings, was to provide a variety of service support to TF 77, TF 90, and TF 91 in the form of replenishment, rearmament, repair, salvage, and towing.

**b. Air Forces**

Far East Air Force was to provide indirect combat support and logistics support for Operation Chromite. B-29 bombing squadrons were to conduct interdiction operations against railroad marshalling yards leading to

Seoul from D minus 10 days to D minus 3 days. (Futrell, 1983, p. 151) Logistics support was to be another important role for ground-based air. Once Kimpo airfield was captured, it was to serve as an airhead for the movement of supplies to support the operations at the airfield and to support the ground forces through the prompt airlift of supplies. It was expected that the cargo capacity of Inchon and the available ground transport would be saturated. FEAF was to provide ground engineer units, to repair and maintain Kimpo airfield, and cargo handling units to unload transport aircraft. FEAF was to also provide direct combat support to the Eighth Army in the breakout from the Pusan perimeter. (Futrell, 1983, pp. 151, 160-161)

Once the headquarters of X Corps was established ashore, control of air space within the objective area was to shift to Tactical Air Command X (TAC X). It was to coordinate the combat operations of MAG 33 and the carrier based aircraft in direct support of the 1st Marine Division and the 7th Infantry Division. MAG 33 was to command the ground-based Marine Corps squadrons which were to provide a portion of direct combat support. and were to be based at Kimpo Airfield, once that location was secured by the ground forces. The command and maintenance elements of MAG 33 were to redeploy from the perimeter to the objective area onboard TG 90.4 ships. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, pp. 167-170)

## **E. CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN**

Whether the conditions required for Phase III of the campaign had been met was subject to interpretation. General Walker, Commanding Officer of the Eighth Army which was engaged in holding the Pusan perimeter was not comfortable with the correlation of forces in southeast Korea. MacArthur was

confident not only that the perimeter would hold, but that the Eighth Army was strong enough for offensive operations. As originally conceived, the breakout from the perimeter was to coincide with D-Day for Operation Chromite. Hoping to gain an advantage from the delayed reaction of the confusion of the North Koreans caused by the amphibious landing in their rear, General Walker received permission to begin his offensive operations on D plus 1 day.

Elements of the 1st Marine Division arrived in Kobe, Japan throughout 29 August to 3 September. The process of reconfiguring the load of the assault transports began immediately. Working on a tight schedule, it was interrupted for one day due to a typhoon passing through Japan. Only the assault elements were combat loaded because of the light sea and air opposition that was expected from the North Koreans. The 7th Division would be administratively loaded.

Another typhoon was detected forming to the south; it was anticipated that it would interfere with the transit of TG 90.1, TG 90.2, and TG 90.3. Some elements of the ATF had departed, and Admiral Doyle decided to accelerate the sortie plan on D minus 4 days to allow the remaining elements of the ATF to avoid the typhoon.

As the assault forces were embarking onboard transports, prelanding operations began in the vicinity of Inchon. Wolmi-do was attacked by Marine aircraft from the CVEs dropping napalm on D minus 5 days. Upon completion of the mission, they transited to Sasebo to replenish, in order to arrive back in the vicinity of Inchon to support additional pre-assault preparations and the attack on D-Day. To divert attention away from Inchon,



on the same day the British light carrier *HMS Triumph* conducted a diversionary raid in the vicinity of Kunson. The fast carriers from TF 77 conducted further strikes on both Inchon and Wolmi-do on D minus 3 days and D minus 2 days.

The destroyers of TG 90.6 proceeded up the channel to bombard Wolmi-do on D minus 2 days. While in the channel, they came across some mines, which they detected in time to destroy with gunfire. During the bombardment, the ships took position 500 yards from the island. As a result, two of the ships suffered some casualties and minor damage from the enemy shore. Upon completion of the mission, they moved back down the channel, destroying eight more mines. The following day, they repeated the mission, encountering no more mines.

Early on D-Day, TG 90.1 started up the channel to land TG 92.12 at GREEN Beach. The first wave hit the beach at 0633 hours, after air and naval gunfire had provided more than thirty minutes of suppression fire. Resistance was light, and by 1030 hours the island was under control. Encouraged by the ease of capture of the island, the commander of BLT 3/5 requested permission to send a reconnaissance in force of tanks and infantry across the causeway into the city. Headquarters denied the request, believing it would entail too much risk. The battalion remained on the island and prepared to support the main landing that evening. (Montros and Canzona, 1955, pp. 87-94)

The main landing was again preceded by extensive air and naval fires to suppress enemy activity. The first wave landing at RED Beach successfully got over the seawall; on the right they advanced into the city and began to move on the initial objectives, on the left they suffered some casualties and

the advance was held up by an enemy strongpoint. Units from the center were able to outflank and destroy the enemy strongpoint, allowing the advance inland to begin along the entire front. At this point, the fourth and fifth waves became intermixed in the boat lane. When they landed they were disorganized; it took some time reorganize those units and get a coherent advance going. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, pp. 105-110) By 0001 hours a rough perimeter had been established covering the assault force objectives. The eight LSTs had landed on RED Beach with little problem and were in the process of being off-loaded.

The landing on BLUE Beach was also disorganized. The area was covered by smoke from burning buildings on the shore, which made navigation by the LVTs in the boat lane difficult. Colonel Lewis B. Puller, RCT 1 Commander, landed in the fourth wave, and began to organize the forces on the beach. There was one narrow exit from the beach, but resistance was light. After the initial confusion, progress was made before the advance was halted for the night. (Montross and Canzona, 1955, pp. 115-122) After the assault waves and their immediate logistical needs were landed, BLUE Beach was closed, and supply points were established at RED Beach and GREEN Beach to continue the buildup of combat power into the beachhead.

On D plus 1 day, RCT 1 and RCT 5 linked up and continued the advance to the FBHL, which they reached by 1700 hours. The command post for the 1st Marine Division was established ashore, and the Commanding General assumed responsibility for operations ashore at 1800 hours, ending the amphibious assault phase of Operation Chromite.

The next day (D plus 2 days) began the next phase of the operation, the exploitation of the landing. RCT 5 began its advance to Kimpo Airfield; it reached the airfield that evening and was able to occupy half of the airfield. The North Koreans counterattacked that night, but the attacks were weak and disjointed resulting in no effect. RCT 1 continued an advance to the east along the Inchon-Seoul road, encountering enemy resistance along the route.

Kimpo Airfield was cleared of enemy troops on the morning of D plus 3 days, and was ready for operation by fighter aircraft by D plus 5 days. RCT 5 next prepared to cross the Han River, after clearing the south bank of the river of all enemy forces in its sector. The crossing took place on D plus 5 days; by D plus 6 days the entire regiment was operating on the north bank of the Han River.

Joint Task Force 7 was dissolved on D plus 6 days, when control of the land campaign passed from Admiral Struble to General Almond, Commanding General of X Corps. The naval forces were redesignated the Support Force, and remained in the area until 1 October, under the command of Admiral Struble. (Fields, 1962, p. 217)

The 32nd Infantry Regiment of the 7th Infantry Division landed at Inchon on 18 September; it moved to the front lines and took a position on the right flank of the 1st Marines, which was accomplished by 1800 hours on 19 September. RCT 1 continued to advance toward Yongdungpo. The North Koreans had decided to commit a substantial number of troops to its defense, hoping to forestall the capture of Seoul. In two days of hard fighting the Marines succeeded in capturing the town and arrived on the banks of the Han river opposite Seoul.

The 31st Infantry Regiment of the 7th Infantry Division landed in Inchon on 19 September and was deployed on the right flank of the 32nd Infantry Regiment. The last major ground force to enter the objective area was RCT 7, which had been organizing for combat in Japan, combining a battalion from the Mediterranean with reserves and other troops from the United States. They embarked in Kobe on 17 September and arrived in Inchon on 22 September. The 7th Marines deployed across the Han River, to pass in the rear of the 5th Marines and to operate to the northeast of Seoul.

On 22 September, the town of Suwon, and the airfield in its vicinity, was captured by the 31st Regiment. The airfield was immediately put into use by United Nations aircraft. (Appleman, 1961, p. 522) To the north, the 32nd Regiment was advancing to the southeast of Seoul, capturing key terrain controlling the roads into the city from the south. By 24 September the 32nd Regiment was on the south bank of the Han River. (Appleman, 1961, p. 523)

To the northwest of Seoul, the 5th Marines met resistance from a brigade and a regiment of enemy troops established in defensive positions dug into the heights. An attempt to capture the hills and defeat the enemy force failed in a series of attacks on 22 September and 23 September. On 24 September the attack was preceded by air strikes, of which five of ten planes were damaged by North Korean antiaircraft fire. This attack succeeded, and the outer defenses of Seoul fell, leaving the way open for an attack into the city.

General Smith, commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, and General Almond, commanding general of X Corps, disagreed on the disposition of forces for the attack into Seoul. Smith wanted to unite the Division on the north side of the Han River. His preferred plan was to cross



the 1st Marines over the river, advance them along the north bank of the river, then have them change direction and attack through the center of the city. Almond was concerned that the frontal assaults of the Marines would take too much time, and preferred to have the 1st Marines maneuver from their position in Yongdungpo along the south bank of the Han River, then cross the river and attack into Seoul. On 23 September, Almond told Smith that he could cross the 1st Marines over the river before attacking into Seoul, but that the division boundaries would be shifted to allow the 32nd Regiment and the 17th Regiment to envelop the city from the south. (Appleman, 1962, p. 527)

On 25 September, as the Marines were entering Seoul, the two regiments from the 7th Infantry Division crossed the Han River. Against light enemy defenses, they cleared the north bank of the river. Based on reports of columns of enemy forces leaving the city to the northeast received at dusk on 25 September, General Almond mistakenly believed that the North Koreans were abandoning the city. He ordered immediate attack into the city. The enemy in front of the 1st Marine Division launched a counterattack to cover the withdrawal of other North Korean forces. The enemy counterattack delayed the general advance into the center of the city. The following day, the attack by the Marines resumed and gained little ground. The North Koreans had built barricades defended by soldiers with antitank weapons and machine guns. On 27 September, the street fighting continued, but the center of the city had been captured and enemy resistance had been broken. (Appleman, 1961, pp. 529-536)

The last stages of Operation Chromite began on 27 September, when the 31st Regiment linked with units of the 1st Cavalry Division at Osan. The formal ceremony of returning Seoul to the South Korean government was held on 29 September. By 7 October, all of the X Corps forces had been relieved by units of the Eighth Army, ending Operation Chromite. The gunfire support ships had been released on 4 October, when there were no longer any targets within gunnery range, and TF 77 had withdrawn from the area on 3 October. The Fifth Air Force had relieved Tactical Air Command X on 5 October. (Field, 1962, pp. 216-218)

## F. ANALYSIS

In many respects, it is difficult to conduct a conclusive analysis of the Korean campaign. The military aspects of the campaign are straightforward; the campaign, and especially Operation Chromite, was an example of the flexibility that can be put into effect when a naval power fights with high quality, technologically superior forces on an accessible peninsula. However, a similar generalization is impossible when those military operations are placed into the larger political context; both the military and political leadership was uncertain of the overall objective of the campaign, and of the war.

The commitment of ground forces into Korea, in addition to the previously committed naval and air forces, led to the possibility for joint operations subordinate to the unified theater commander. It was the operational perspective of the theater commander, General MacArthur, who ensured that these joint forces would be used in a dramatic and effective manner.

As in the previous two case studies, it was the common sense and capabilities of professional military officers, in the context of a specific situation, that overcame the obstacles preventing the planning and execution of a model joint operation. The experience of these men in World War Two, and not efforts to achieve "efficiencies" through service unification or the official establishment of a joint staff, was the source of joint operational competency during Operation Chromite. This is not meant to imply that inter-service rivalry was absent, but only that it was not insurmountable. This operational competency was squandered due to the inability to articulate a strategic objective for the war.

The objective of a campaign in a maritime theater is derived from conditions within that theater, which are derived from the larger strategic interests of the nation. If the Korean War is viewed within the larger context of the Cold War, then the interrelationship of a maritime theater to a primary theater holds. That primary theater was Western Europe, but the indirect effect of events between the theaters is difficult to trace in a cold war. Thus, part of the reason that a clear objective could not be articulated was the tendency to view Western Europe and Korea as either directly related, through Soviet complicity, or not related, through geographical and cultural distance. The ideal would have been to view each theater as an independent entity, though related through the effects of U.S. policy.

A second reason that the U.S. could not articulate an objective for its strategy in a limited war may have been a lack of experience, other than for a brief period during the Spanish-American War. Since the Seventeenth Century, European powers conducted military campaigns in maritime

theaters to achieve limited objectives that would translate into increased economic power, destruction of an enemy's economic base, or for bargaining leverage in post-war peace negotiations. The U.S. has normally conducted campaigns in a maritime theater for a military purpose, and not as a part of a comprehensive strategic design. When confronted by the complexities of a limited war in a location that did not have a linear military-strategic relationship, U.S. leadership became frustrated.

In the summer of 1950, these uncertainties over the ultimate objective of the war provided MacArthur with the freedom to develop a plan that not only had an objective of recovering the territory of South Korea, but also of destroying the North Korean army fighting in South Korea. By attacking from the sea in a bold envelopment, MacArthur hoped to seize the initiative from the North Koreans. Once that concept was formed in his mind, the process of planning an amphibious operation began, utilizing a proven amphibious warfare doctrine. From this doctrine, an operation was systematically organized. At both the theater level and the joint task force level, forces were organized in a decentralized manner. The effect of this was to divide responsibilities based on the capabilities of available forces.

During the execution of the plan, most combat occurred on the ground due to the absence of effective enemy opposition at sea and in the air. In some respects, the overwhelming supporting fires that were available reduced tactics to a reliance on attrition and methodical advance, rather than on maneuver and surprise. This possibly had the effect of prolonging the operation, as it gave the enemy the time and opportunity to concentrate their



forces while on the defensive. A campaign of maneuver may have kept the enemy off balance and led to a quicker victory.

In planning Operation Chromite, MacArthur correctly gauged the enemy's weaknesses, primarily the imbalance between the large number of North Koreans fighting in the south and the small number remaining to guard communications in the rest of the peninsula. MacArthur saw the campaign both as a comprehensive entity and as a number of constituent parts. This enabled him to envision a series of military operations divided both by distance and by time.

Such a sophisticated campaign, in the particular circumstances of Korea, not only required joint forces, but also that they be decentralized. MacArthur balanced the forces available between the Eighth Army and JTF 7, and the supporting forces for both, which resulted in a suitable use of the unified forces in the theater. This left his subordinate commanders with sufficient latitude to execute their portion of the overall plan, and gave the entire operation a degree of flexibility.

## V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has approached the topic of planning from the point of view that joint operations in a maritime theater create specific problems for the conduct of military operations. To analyze those problems, two related concepts were introduced. First, the operational perspective to provide the link between strategic objectives and combat. Second, the existence of a dynamic relationship between planning and combat.

A maritime theater is a tool for the political and military leadership of a nation used to allocate resources, among them military forces, and which contains national strategic objectives. For the military planner viewing a maritime theater from the operational perspective, a prominent characteristic is that lines of communication that are of strategic interest or are required to support military operations lay primarily over water. Implicit to this characteristic is that the maritime theater will be located at a distance from the major source of national (or alliance) military power or of the greatest threat to the nation (or alliance). Thus, a maritime theater will usually have a secondary importance to some other theater. This concept was demonstrated by each of the case studies. For Great Britain in 1915, the primary theater was in Western Europe, or for the Entente as a whole, it was in Eastern Europe. For both Germany in 1940 and the United States in 1950, the primary theater was also in Western Europe. Nonetheless, each nation conducted military operations in a maritime theater.

A corollary to this relationship between theaters of operations is that the success or failure of a nation to attain its strategic objectives in one theater is

indirectly related to the success or failure in another. The failure of Great Britain in Turkey did not result in a failure in Western Europe. Nor did the success of Germany in Norway lead directly to its success in France and the Low Countries later that year.

The combination of water and distance leads to further conclusions concerning the nature of military operations in a maritime theater. First, there is the problem of mobility, both beyond the boundaries of the nation to the theater and also within the theater. This was solved by each nation through a combination of methods. Great Britain in 1915, as a sea power, utilized its control of the sea to move its forces. Germany in 1940, without the benefit of overwhelming sea power, combined movement over the sea and through the air. Germany attained control of the sea for a limited period of time through the innovative use of combatants to quickly move assault forces by sea. A considerable amount of air transport was also used to provide a prompt build-up of combat power in the theater. The United States in 1950 also used a combination of sea and air transport to move military forces into the theater, though with the benefit of sea and air control. This combination of different means to move military forces is one source of joint operations in a maritime theater.

A second source of joint operations in a maritime theater arises when there is a desire to obtain a decisive objective in a maritime theater. This requires the use of ground forces. To provide combat support to the ground forces to allow a measure of freedom to maneuver requires a combination of sea and air forces to gain superiority in those elements. This naturally leads to a joint operation.

The combined use of ground, sea, and air forces, in some sort of preplanned arrangement against an enemy force, to attain a strategic, objective leads to combat. It is on this relationship between preplanned actions and combat, within the context of joint operations in a maritime theater, that this analysis will now focus.

A plan foresees combat, or a series of combats, each which contributes to the attainment of the objective. Two aspects of combat breeds a condition of uncertainty. First is the existence of friction, illustrated in the Gallipoli case study by the unintended landing of the first assault wave at ANZAC Beach one mile north of the intended beach center. Second is the opposing will of the enemy, illustrated in the same case study by the unexpected tenacity of the Turkish defenders.

Despite this uncertainty, success in combat is the key element in the planning/execution relationship. Toward this end, a plan must bring forces into combat with the enemy under favorable conditions, to achieve some combination of surprise, initiative, and concentration of available forces relative to the enemy. This requires the cooperation among the forces available. Additionally, the uncertain nature of combat creates a dynamic situation that may invalidate a considerable portion of the original course of action. It follows that a plan can contribute to success in combat in two ways: (1) by coordinating the actions of the available forces, and (2) by communicating the intent of the operation.

The characteristics of a maritime theater create problems for coordination of joint forces. The planning to coordinate the actions of available forces is derived from the intent of the operation, and assisted by a systematic



planning process and the promulgation of a written plan. The written plan can be in any one of a number of formats: a five paragraph operation order, a letter of instruction, or a pre-formatted naval message. A systematic planning process makes the mass of details, required in an operations plan, more manageable. The complexity of the actual plans for the three campaigns analyzed was only alluded to in this study. For example, the reconfiguration of the 29th Division prior to the Gallipoli landing, the logistic detail required to support Group XXI in Norway, and the reembarkation of the 1st Marine Division within hours of most of the division arriving in the Far East Theater, all represent an extensive planning effort.

Separate from details of planning procedures, the case studies have stressed the conceptual aspect of planning, which requires an understanding of the problems of coordination. As was demonstrated in each case study, coordination among joint forces can be accomplished through the organization of means, space, and time. Coordination of means in each case was accomplished through decentralization by forming interdependent task groups assigned specific missions. Coordination of space was accomplished in two ways. First, through the division of the theater into smaller operating areas and the assignment of a specific unit to those areas. Second, through the designation of objectives ashore, to serve as points of reference. Coordination of time was accomplished through either sequential or concurrent operations, which was dependent upon the situation.

The promulgation of procedures is a further method of coordination that can be accomplished through the plan. This was not stressed in the case studies, but one can see the value of prearranged communications procedures

and networks, execution checklists to allow a headquarters to passively monitor the progress of operations, and schedules for resupply of combatant forces. Many of these procedures are part of service doctrinal preferences, such as procedures for close air support, and have the potential to result in confusion in a joint operation if not clearly delineated prior to operations.

The result of this coordination through a plan is to bring the commander's forces into advantageous position for combat, and also to provide the framework for the ongoing cooperation of forces throughout the course of the operation. There is a need for sufficient detail in the plan to accomplish the coordination required, yet success in combat, and not the sophistication of the plan, will determine the ultimate success or failure of the campaign. To provide for success in combat, partially through maneuver beyond initial combat and through initiative of subordinates, requires a flexible plan.

The most important purpose of a plan is to communicate the intent of the operation. Subordinates engaged in combat, if aware of the commander's intentions, will use that information to guide their actions. Parallel with the initiative of subordinates, the commander utilizes subsequent plans, which build on the initial plan, to shape combat to achieve the desired effect. Through the selective monitoring of combat at decisive points, the commander can obtain the information necessary to alter the original plan. When taking all of these influences and interrelationships into account, we see the need for maintenance of an operational perspective, focused on the objective of the campaign.

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